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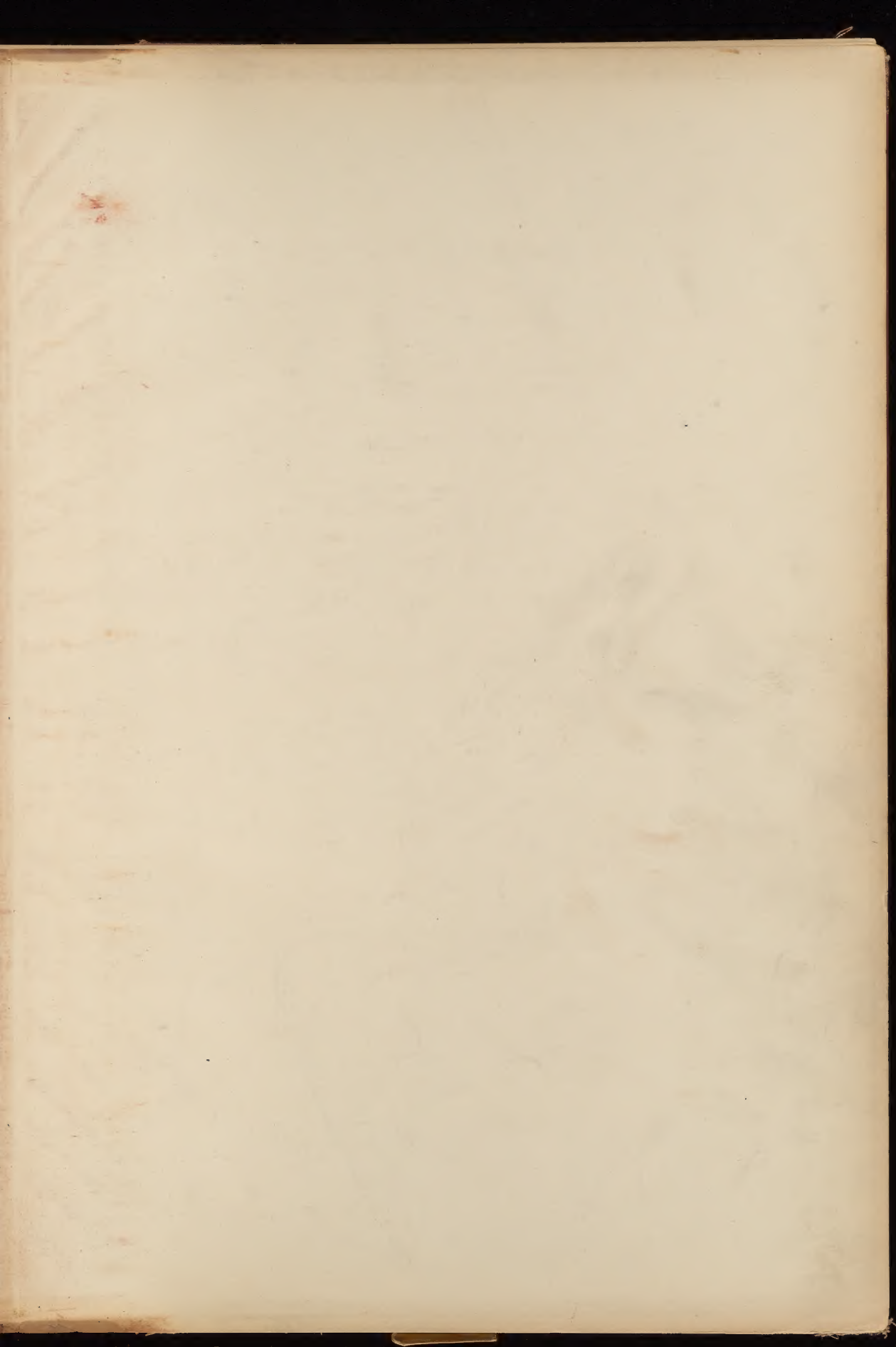




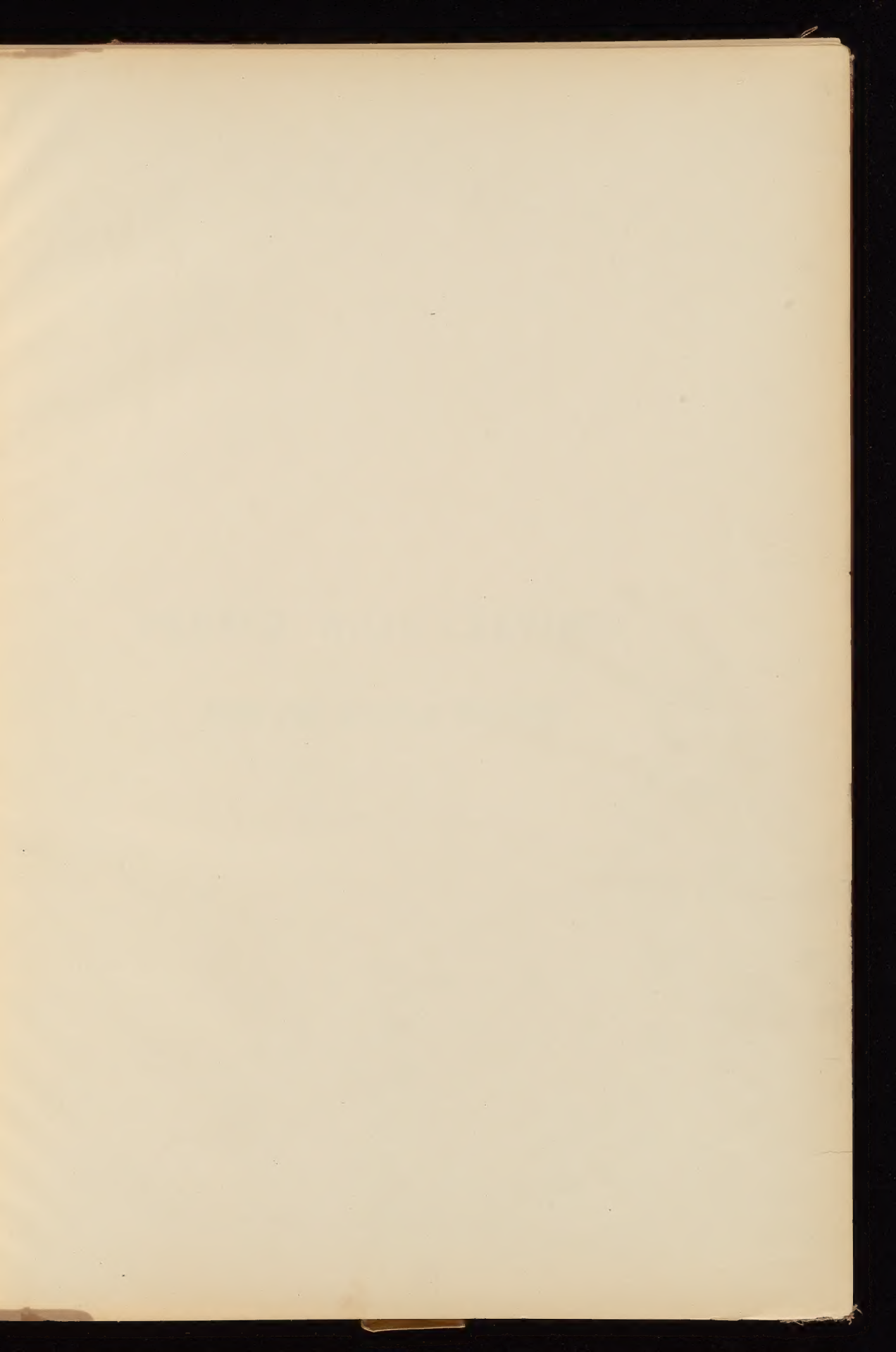
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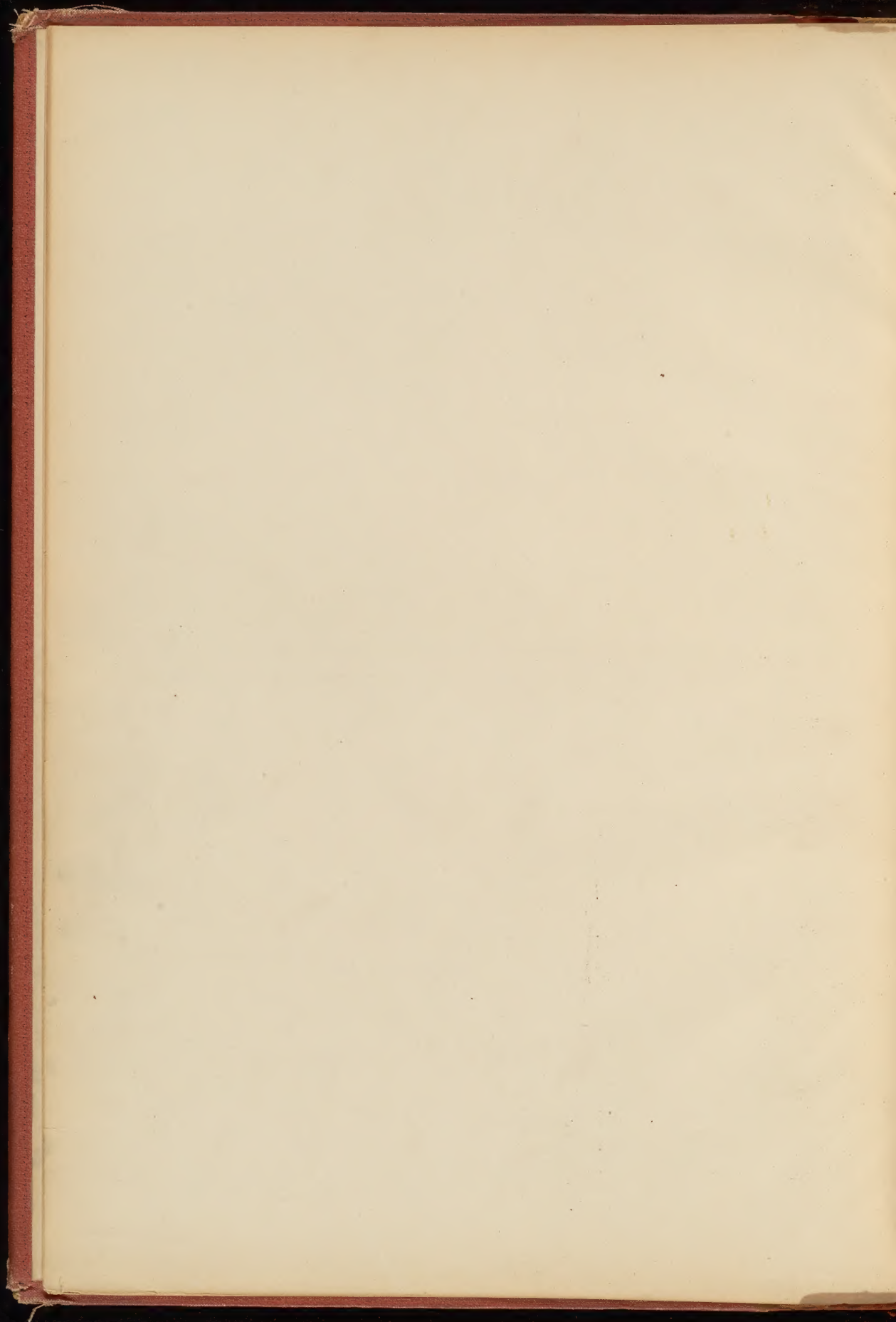
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# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS

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ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS



*With the sanction of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education.*

# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS

PRINTED IN COLLOTYPE FROM PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAKEN FROM  
THE CARVINGS DIRECT

EDITED BY

ELEANOR ROWE

AUTHOR OF 'HINTS ON WOOD CARVING'; 'HINTS ON CHIP CARVING'; 'STUDIES FROM THE MUSEUMS'; ETC.

MANAGER OF THE SCHOOL OF ART WOOD CARVING, SOUTH KENSINGTON

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FIRST SERIES

LATE FIFTEENTH AND EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURIES



B. T. BATSFORD, 94 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON

1896



## P R E F A C E .

I N editing these Series of 'French Wood Carvings' my endeavour has been to popularise as far as possible the carvings in our National Museums. In arranging such a collection the needs of a variety of Students, both professional and amateur, have to be considered. I shall therefore make my remarks simple and practical, not presupposing any knowledge of the subject.

Details obvious to the skilled designer and carver would probably be unnoticed by the inexperienced Student. It is to him, therefore, that I hope to suggest a systematic and intelligent method of study.

The limited choice of objects at my disposal has made it impossible to treat the subject from a purely historical point of view, as there is no connected chain, although the examples have been classified chronologically. They have been principally selected from the collection of French Woodwork bought by the authorities of the South Kensington Museum in 1895, and now divided amongst the various National Museums.

After mature consideration, and acting upon the advice of several French experts, I have decided on dividing the centuries into early, middle, and late, and when a king's name is mentioned it is to suggest that the design and carving are typical of the style prevalent during his reign, rather than to assert that the work was actually carried out in his lifetime.

I cordially recommend to all Students Mons. A. de Champeaux's book 'Le Meuble,' from which I have derived much useful information. To Mr. LATHAM I am indebted for the excellent negatives supplied for the reproductions, and to Mr. F. A. CRALLAN for the sectional drawings, which will be invaluable to the practical worker.

I have also very cordially to thank the Directors of our National Museums and their Assistants for their kindness in giving me every facility with regard to the preparation of the Plates.

ELEANOR ROWE.

46 PEMBROKE ROAD, W.  
*June 1896.*





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# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

OF

## THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

SELECTED FROM OUR NATIONAL MUSEUMS.

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THE advisability of frequently visiting our National Museums cannot be too strongly impressed upon the Student, to whom a note-book for sketches and for jotting down suggestions is indispensable. He should on no account forget to note the period as well as the country from which the object comes, as it is only by comparing one example with another that he learns how to discriminate the characteristics of the various styles. Mouldings help more than anything else to date a piece of furniture or carving; they should therefore be carefully drawn, and notes made as to the most appropriate enrichments of the various members. When we come to speak of the Plates in detail, a number of points will be noticed that the casual observer might pass over, but which the Student should not fail to observe, as the neglect of them too often leads to crude and unsatisfactory work. Amateur carvers rarely leave sufficient margin to their carved surfaces, and this they often completely detach by cutting it straight down, instead of sloping the inner line of the margin towards the ground of the carving, as may be seen in Plates I., IX., XI., XII. and XV. Another method is to run a hollow on the inside of the margin, as shown in Plates XIII., XVII. and XVIII.

The examples we are about to study are not all of the highest type, yet that does not detract from their value to the student.

Good specimens of mediæval Gothic wood carving are difficult to obtain, more especially those with foliage, such as may be seen on Plates I., XII. and XIV. In none of these examples is there the freedom and the grace which is to be found in the flamboyant wood carvings, seen in all their perfection in the carved oak stalls of Amiens Cathedral.

Mr. Ruskin,\* speaking of this Cathedral, advises those who have but little time to spend there to give it all to the contemplation of the choir:—

"Aisles and porches, lancet windows and roses, you can see elsewhere as well as here—but such carpenter's work, you cannot. It is late, fully-developed flamboyant just past the fifteenth century . . . and, so far as I know, there is nothing else so beautiful cut out of the goodly trees of the world. . . . Oak, *trained* and chosen for such work, sound now as four hundred years since. Under the carver's hand it seems to cut like clay, to fold like silk, to grow like living branches, to leap like living flame. Canopy crowning canopy, pinnacle piercing pinnacle—it shoots and wreaths itself into an enchanted glade, inextricable, imperishable, fuller of leafage than any forest, and fuller of story than any book." He goes on to say that

\* 'The Bible of Amiens.' John Ruskin, 1881.

no nails are used in the construction—all is morticed, and so beautifully, that the joints have not moved to this day, and are still almost imperceptible.

These beautiful carved stalls were begun by Arnold Boulín in 1508; he was assisted by Alexander Huet in 1511, and by Jean Turpin in 1516. The entire work was completed on St. John's Day, 1522, at the cost of about four hundred "sterling English pounds."

The earliest pieces of furniture were the chests; then came the "armoires," or small cupboard, first made for holding the sacerdotal robes of the priests, and usually kept in the church one on either side of the high altar. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries these chests and "armoires" were generally decorated with paintings, or ornamented with wrought iron work. The cupboard door usually consisted of two or three boards clamped together at the back by cross bars, and it was not until the end of the fourteenth century, says M. Viollet-le-Duc, that the form and construction changed, creating quite a fresh development in the art of the cabinet-maker and joiner. It is then that the Linenfold pattern, known in France as "Parchemin plié" (see Plates X. and XII.) was introduced, although it did not reach its full development in France until the fifteenth century, and in England still later.

In our study of French wood carvings we may note how sensibly this form of decoration is used, being always placed in the parts that are subject to friction or rough usage, where elaborate carving would be quite out of place. It can hardly be classed as carving, as it is principally worked with the joiner's plane, only the top and bottom of the fold being touched by the carver's tools. It is an invaluable means of introducing light and shade into panelling at a comparatively small cost, and helps to break up the monotony of an even surface or the severity of an uncarved panel.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century Flanders was the most important artistic centre. Several of the provinces of the Netherlands belonged to the dukes of Burgundy, who were the richest and most influential of the feudal lords. They resided sometimes at Dijon and sometimes at Brussels. The most important edifice that these dukes erected was the "Chartreuse of Dijon," now almost entirely destroyed. The building was begun in 1380 by Philip the Hardy, Duke of Burgundy, who gathered together all the leading artists and sculptors of his day, both from France and Flanders, to carry out the work. The Museum at Dijon is rich in specimens of this period, in which the Flemish influence is very visible.

Monsieur de Champeaux, in 'Le Meuble,' gives a most interesting account of the development of the arts in France towards the middle of the thirteenth century, which was mainly owing to the establishment of "communes" in all the large towns. Up to that time art had been the monopoly of the monks, who either were practical workers themselves or they utilised the work of such artisans as sought the protection of the monasteries, in those perilous times, by settling in their vicinity. As the towns were gradually put under royal protection, the workmen were enabled to throw off the ecclesiastical control, and formed themselves into corporations or guilds, in which were associated all the skilled workers of each trade.

Monsieur de Champeaux gives a detailed account of these various corporations, which seem to have existed in France even in the days of ancient Gaul. The corporation of "Charpentiers-huchiers" becoming insufficient for the various branches of the trade over which it had jurisdiction, another was formed for the "Huchiers-menuisiers" in 1382. No one was admitted who had not submitted a masterpiece, the work of his own hands, to the satisfaction of the selecting jury, and no one was allowed to do this unless he had been apprenticed for

six years to a master of his craft. It is only by examining the influences under which the older workmen lived that we can at all realise the revolution which has been gradually brought about in building and in cabinet work. Competition and independence may have its advantages, but when our public works are given out to the lowest contractor, it is not surprising that art should suffer and be inferior to what it was in the good old days. There are plenty of good and artistic carvers still to be found, but they have to work to live, and the joy and the pleasure of their work is crushed out by the feeling that they must turn out a given quantity in a given time. How can artistic work be expected under these circumstances? This, however, is a digression. To return to the Middle Ages, on Plate IV. we have a bit of Gothic tracery from the Abbey of Cluny. This celebrated abbey, in the Department of the Saône and Loire, France, was founded in 909 by William, Duke of Aquitaine. Mons. E. Corroyer, in his 'Gothic Architecture,' says: "Cluny rapidly became a centre round which all the intelligence which had escaped submersion in the chaos of the ninth century grouped itself. Its school soon attained a distinction equal to that which marked the first great seats of learning at the beginning of the Middle Ages. . . . While this struggle of intelligence against ignorance was in progress, a social revolution had accomplished itself by the enfranchisement of the communes, a development of the utmost importance in its relation to science, art and material existence; in a word, to the whole social system." The Abbey Church was begun in 1089, the largest of its time in Western Europe, and only second to St. Peter's at Rome in subsequent ages. It was a splendid Romanesque building, and was consecrated in 1131 by Pope Innocent II. It was partially destroyed by fire in 1789, and in 1793, when it fell into the hands of the townspeople, all its treasures were sold, and the very walls were pulled down and used for other buildings. For a most interesting account of the Abbey I recommend my reader to Mons. M. P. Lorain's 'L'Abbaye de Cluny.' The carved panel that has come down to us is of late fifteenth century work.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century Charles VIII. invaded Italy, with varying successes. Charmed, however, with the beautiful works of art he saw in Naples, he brought back with him several Italian artists, and installed them at the Château d'Amboise. Louis XII. carried on the war with Italy, and by the end of his reign, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, France had quite adopted the Renaissance style (see Plate XV.). The influence of the foreign workmen did not materially affect the French school until the middle of the sixteenth century, and it is the opinion of many French experts that French art would have developed with far greater vigour, variety, and originality, had not the standard of Italian art been set up in France. Unfortunately there are no examples of the Transitional style, from Gothic to Renaissance, in this collection.

We will now begin the study of the Plates in detail, remembering that the Gothic style was predominant in France during the fifteenth century, and the Renaissance style during the sixteenth century. Examples of late fifteenth century Gothic carving are given on Plates I. to XIV., and of early sixteenth century Renaissance carving on Plates XV. to XVIII. Further examples of Renaissance work will be given in the Second Series.

PLATE I. is a Gothic coffer of about the middle of the fifteenth century. The base is modern, and not a very happy or suitable construction. Gothic chests carved with floral ornament are very rare, and this is, on that account, an interesting specimen. It is made of oak, and the panels are carved about five-sixteenths of an inch in relief, whilst the



figures are about half an inch. There is a want of spring and vigour in the carving of the panels, the details of which are on too large a scale to compose well with the figures. The vertical growth given to the hops is a fault which might have been easily obviated. In the panel on the left of the centre figure the spaces are well filled, and there is an agreeable distribution of the pattern over the ground. Notice the inner line of the margin of the panel is sloped towards the pattern, and not cut down straight; also, that the small band dividing the two semicircular-headed panels runs through the basket work into the plain margin, as does some of the weaving. This helps to give strength to the design by uniting the details, and is a principle modern carvers should well consider and amateurs lay to heart. In the fourteenth century, mouldings on furniture were very rude, although the bold hollows round the panels of this chest are quite in keeping with the rest of the design. Note how frankly the moulding stops on the muntin, or centre-piece of framing, where the full width of the wood is required to receive the ornamental iron lock, also that the chamfer takes the place of the moulding at the bottom—a noticeable feature in Gothic work, although continued late into the sixteenth century on work which otherwise had become Renaissance in character. The side panels are carved in the same way, but have no figures. The basket weaving at the bottom of the panel appears to be a purely French treatment, and to have found favour in the North of France. Other panels very similar to those on this chest may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, notably a hop panel, No. 805-1895, which is almost identical with the carved panel on the right of the centre figure of the chest. No. 875-1895, a thistle panel, though much injured, is good in design and vigorous in execution.

PLATE II. A Carved Oak Gothic Cabinet. This is another rare specimen of furniture, and would lend itself in many ways to reproduction. A section is given on the Plate of the mouldings that crown the Cabinet, and also of those that frame in the small central tracery panel. In the hollow just below the top moulding in section, the thick line gives the ground of the hollow, and the fine line in front the projection of the small pateræ which have been fitted in at regular intervals.

The relief of the tracery in the side doors is a little over three-quarters of an inch, and the cusping five-sixteenths. The middle panel is half an inch and the cusping three-eighths in relief. The lower panel, which is five-eighths of an inch and the cusping three-eighths in relief, is a most excellent example of Gothic tracery, and might be adapted in various ways. The central panel is too small in scale for the rest of the carving. The design of the side panels is unusual, but the central leaf is carved with great freedom and vigour. The smaller details on the side doors are ornamental locks and hinges wrought in iron. The buttresses are fifteen inches high, and project one and a-half inches. The sides of the chest have two linenfold panels in the upper division, and a Gothic tracery design in the lower division.

PLATE III. An Oak Seat, carved with Gothic Tracery. The size of the carved panel is three feet two inches by seventeen inches and three-eighths. The relief of the tracery is three-eighths of an inch, and the lower layer of tracery about three-sixteenths, or half the height of that composing the leading lines of the pattern. The leaves or crockets in the head of the arch are nearly three-quarters of an inch in relief. The seat is better in its proportion and construction than in the carving, in which there is a general want of scale and freedom. The lower part no doubt formed a box, and it is interesting to see how the different parts of

it were fitted together. The little buttress at the side is very graceful, and is three feet and half an inch high; it projects at the base two inches, and one and a half inches at the top.

It will be noticed that round the outside of the carved panel there is a narrow band and then a dark line. This line of shadow has been produced by a V-cut groove, which was probably cut with a chisel; it is about a quarter of an inch in width, and about the same in depth. At the top the flat band intersects in a pleasing way, and so breaks the regularity of the light and shade. The same treatment may be noticed in Plates X. and XII., and is a simple but excellent means of producing a very good effect.

PLATE IV. is a late fifteenth century Gothic Tracery Panel, from the Abbey of Cluny, to which reference has been made in the introduction. The filling up of the spaces between the circle and the arch is very graceful. The highest relief for the device and shield is eleven-sixteenths of an inch, but the general relief of the tracery is about nine-sixteenths, whilst the cusping and inner tracery are about three-eighths.

PLATE V. is a fragment of a Gothic Tracery Panel. The little column from which the arches spring is unusual in panelled woodwork, and the crockets starting where the two arches meet is uncommon, as they usually spring from the arch moulding. The arrangement of the tracery is not always happy, being in parts too unsymmetrical, notably on either side of the small column, and the arrangement of line is not very graceful in the head of the little lancet-shaped arch. The cut line at the top is effective. The shield with the fleur-de-lys is seven-sixteenths of an inch in relief, the tracery five-sixteenths, and the cusping and inner tracery about three-sixteenths.

PLATE VI. is a Gothic Tracery Panel with a shield bearing the sacred monogram. The interpenetration of the mouldings round the upper part of the panel, the threading of the strap through the mouldings of the arch, as well as the shape of the shield (see Plate XI.), betray a German influence, although the carving of the tracery and the buttresses is essentially French. The most prominent parts are the crockets, the arch mouldings and the buttresses; these are about seven-eighths of an inch in relief, the leading lines of the tracery half an inch, and the cusping about three-sixteenths.

PLATE VII. is the front of a Gothic chest, or coffer. The crockets in this spring from the outer moulding of the arch, which dies into the margin. The effect of this is very good, as it avoids carrying the hollow moulding round the panel. The decoration of the buttresses is alternate, one group consisting of little scales, with an aris in the middle of each scale and a hollow on either side, the other group consisting of five small angular faces, cut up and grooved, and running alternately up and down.

Mr. Pollen, in 'Ancient and Modern Furniture and Woodwork in the South Kensington Museum,' referring to this chest, says: "The little buttresses are scaled in the fashion of the fifteenth century late woodwork, when tile coverings or any sort of decorative reticulations that enriched the surface of woodwork were adopted as ornaments. They finish in little crocketed pinnacles. To understand well the best kind of French woodwork of the period preceding the actual introduction of the Renaissance, but when its spirit began to be felt and expressed in the old traditional decorations, the student should be referred to the stall work at Amiens Cathedral."

The sides of the chest have two panels similar to those on the front, and divided by a buttress. The projection of the crockets is half an inch, the relief of the tracery five-sixteenths,

and the cusping about three-sixteenths. The projection of the buttresses is about one and a half inches. The geometrical tracery is somewhat monotonous, and is neither sufficiently bold or varied for the size of the chest.

PLATE VIII. is a Northern French coffer, and, in comparison with the chest we have just been studying, shows much more varied detail. The combination of semicircular-headed arches with geometrical tracery is unusual, but the sturdy columns, with their Romanesque enrichments, are very effective. The flowers in the spandrils of the arches do not compose well with the design, as they are too heavy and coarse. The treatment of the base is also unsatisfactory, although the interlacing of the ribbon is carved with much feeling and delicacy. A pattern in which so much ground is cut away has the effect of weakening the member it decorates, and suggests weakness where, in this chest, one naturally looks for strength. The base has a sunk panel at the top, upon which the chest stands. The semicircular arches project rather more than three-quarters of an inch, the leading lines of the tracery not quite half an inch, the cusping a quarter of an inch, and the little square pateræ three-eighths of an inch. The relief of the border where the ribbons interlace is three-sixteenths of an inch. The deep hollow moulding at the base of the panels is a very effective feature.

PLATE IX. is a Gothic tracery door, and, for a simple door, is very satisfactory. Note how the top panels are designed to make one large panel, whilst those at the bottom are two distinct panels. The way the little rows of arches, four in each line, are stopped by mouldings at the bottom is very ingenious, as they break up the monotony of a plain surface. The centre buttress projects two inches from the muntin, and is on a level at its highest part with the outside moulding, a section of which is attached to the Plate.

PLATE X. is a very rare piece of woodwork, and, as nothing of the kind has been found in place, it is only from conjecture that we can say for what it was originally used. M. Émile Peyre is of opinion that it stood in the corner of a room or church, and formed a little vestibule to a spiral staircase. He called it a "tambour," which simply means drum, but up to the present time I have been unable to find any account of such a structure in Viollet-le-Duc's '*Dictionnaire Raisonné du Mobilier Français*,' or in his '*Dictionnaire de l'Architecture Française*.' There is another similar structure in the South Kensington Museum, which possibly stood in an adjoining room to give access to the same stairs. The linenfold panels are graceful, but there is nothing very special in the Gothic tracery panels or those composed of foliage, animals and birds in the upper row of panels. Note that the margin of these panels slopes into the ground of the carving. The buttresses are very pretty, and are ornamented with the usual scales and leaves, except the end one on the right; this is covered with a diaper pattern, in which the fleur-de-lis is introduced. The hollow moulding round the panels and the V-grooved line beyond are worked on the framing.

PLATE XI. The cupboard door given on this Plate has all the essential characteristics of German work, both in the treatment of the foliage and the shape of the shield, and no one would have hesitated about it had it not been for the three fleur-de-lis, although they are certainly not sufficient evidence to assign the panel to France. It may have been executed in France by a German workman, or in Germany for some French grandee. Note the crown with the acorns and what looks like a bishop's mitre at the back.

The relief of the panel is about three-quarters of an inch. The margin is effectively treated with a fillet and deep hollow beyond, and although in the Plate the fillet looks



detached, it is not so, as the inner line is not cut straight down, but sloped to the ground with rather a deep hollow. The bottom rail of the panel is modern.

The three pieces of moulding above the panel show how mouldings were carved during the Gothic period. Such mouldings were used round the architraves of doors for string courses or in cornices; they had rounded surfaces which were carved deeply, and often the carving was very much undercut. The examples before us are about two inches and three-eighths wide, and have the same projection. The depth of the carving varies from half an inch to five-eighths. Another common method of enriching the mouldings during the Gothic period may be seen on Plate II., in which the deep hollow moulding has small pateræ introduced at regular intervals. These pateræ were often replaced by ornamental bosses.

PLATE XII. is a Gothic door, admirable in execution and proportion. The framework is entirely modern. The linenfold panels are excellent, and there is much to admire in the design and treatment of the top panel, although the start of the ornament from the beasts' mouths is not happy. The foliage is well distributed over the ground, and well united with the margin, which slopes, as before described, into the ground, but there is a want of grace and vigour in the carving, which is not so observable in the Plate as in the object itself. The carving is half an inch in relief. The hollow and V groove are worked out of the framing.

PLATE XIII. This Oak Retable has been selected more with a view to the construction than to the carving, as it might readily be adapted to modern requirements.

It has evidently been painted and gilded, and from what remains of the colour it would appear that the framing was red, enriched here and there by gold pateræ (see centre framing). The carving was about a quarter of an inch in relief, and was gilded, and the ground was painted green. The central buttress has gone, which is a pity, as the gradual rise of the buttresses towards the centre would no doubt have been effective, although the middle panels should have been more important. The tracery panels are better in design than the foliage panels, but the carving of all is poor, and the one solitary figure looks quite out of place. The little buttresses are very graceful, but it is to be regretted that the side ones were cut off on account of the projecting moulding. The cresting is weak, and a better one might easily be designed, although the present one would look better if the pattern at the sides were reversed and carried on to the uprights, as the plain blocks left at either end are very unsightly. Unless the retable stood on a super altar, it would require to be raised by a deep plinth. The section shows the construction and the projection of the buttresses.

PLATE XIV. The figure of the monk is carved out of a solid block of oak, and is an excellent example of the mediæval carved figures in which Flanders and France excelled. Attached to the girdle is a master key, which gave access to all the monks' cells. The hair and the drapery are treated with simplicity and dignity, and there is no unnecessary elaboration of detail. The pedestal is modern, and measures five inches and seven-eighths by six inches and one-eighth. The fragment of a canopy is an interesting piece of flamboyant Gothic, but although the monk preaching from the pulpit composes well with the design, it must be noted that it did not form part of the original construction. The support of the pulpit, which is thoroughly Gothic, is part of the canopy, but the pulpit and the figure form a separate piece of carving. Possibly they may be of the same date as the canopy, but the Renaissance influence is evident in the little nude figures, which are never to be

found in Gothic work. The lower part of the canopy, including the base mouldings, has been restored.

PLATE XV., our first example of Renaissance carving, is not a transitional stage from Gothic to Renaissance, but Renaissance fully developed, though not so fine as Plates XVII. and XVIII. We still note the Gothic influence in the mouldings, notably in the fourth side which is a chamfer. The mouldings are very peculiar, only two sides of each panel having the same treatment. The upper panels are pierced. Note how the pattern is united with the ground by a few gouge cuts, suggestive of the under side of the leaves, and how effective the simple gouge cuts are round the plain surface of the medallion.

The curved bands springing from the dolphins' heads or foliage, with the varied gouge cuts to break up the plain surfaces, form a very marked characteristic of Flemish and French Renaissance carving, as do the medallions also, and it would be interesting to trace in which country they first appeared. The relief of the carving is from three-eighths to half an inch.

PLATE XVI. Of these two oak panels there is nothing much to be said, except that they would be good studies for a beginner, as they are bold and simply executed. They are about three-eighths of an inch in relief. The treatment of the modelling being simple, and not elaborated, one would place them in the Francis I. period, although, compared with Plate XVII., they are but rough specimens.

PLATE XVII. These cupboard doors carved in oak, are two of the most beautiful specimens of French carving belonging to the South Kensington Museum, and are very characteristic of the carving done during the reign of Francis I. It will be seen in this design how all the carving has been kept to the upper part of the panel, and so skilfully is it arranged that we do not seem to require it anywhere else. The ornament is suspended from the top, and has no upward growth, which, I think, accounts for the satisfactory effect obtained. The ribbon is treated very broadly, yet how easily it twists and turns. The ornament is compact, light and graceful, and not frittered by over elaboration of detail. The relief of the carving is a little under half an inch, the greatest projections being the ribbons and the mouldings to which the ribbons are attached.

PLATE XVIII. At the top of this Plate is a portion of an oak panel about half an inch in relief, and carved with floral ornament, in which grace and simplicity are again pre-ëminent. The plain bands connecting the foliage may have been suggested by the pea-pod, the little cuts upon them indicating the seed; we shall see them frequently recurring in the carving of this period.

The carving of the two smaller panels is light and graceful, although firm and decided. The masks and animals' heads lead one to think that they might have been executed by a Flemish workman. The V groove beyond the hollow moulding is a characteristic we noticed in the Gothic period. See Plates X., XII. and XIII. The relief of the carving is half an inch.

Students who wish to pursue their studies further should consult—

'Le Meuble,' by A. de Champeaux.

'Le Meuble en France au Sixième Siècle,' by G. Bonnaffé.

Viollet-le-Duc's 'Dictionnaire Raisoné du Mobilier Français.'

Havard's 'Dictionnaire de l'Aménagement et de la Décoration.'



Oak Coffer. The Panels of the front and sides are carved with fruit and floral ornament, in the front are also figures of St. John the Baptist, St. Peter and St. James, the greater. (The base is modern) H. 2 ft. 7 in. L. 3 ft. 11 1/2 in. W 2 ft 1/2 in.

Museum of Science and Art, Dublin Reg. No. 135 1896.





French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Section on A full size

Carved Oak Cabinet. H. 3 ft. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. L. 3 ft. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 1 ft. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 527-1895.



French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Back of an Oak Seat. Carved with Gothic Tracery. H 7 ft. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 2 ft. 2 in.

Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.





French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Oak Panel. Carved with Gothic Tracery and a Shield bearing a Merchants Mark,  
from the Abbey of Cluny. H. 5 ft. 3½ in. W. 11 in

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 7,3-1893.



French, late 15th Century.



Fragment of an Oak Panel. Carved with the arms of France amid Gothic Tracery. H. 2 ft. 3¼ in. W. 11 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 868—1895.





French, late 15th Century.



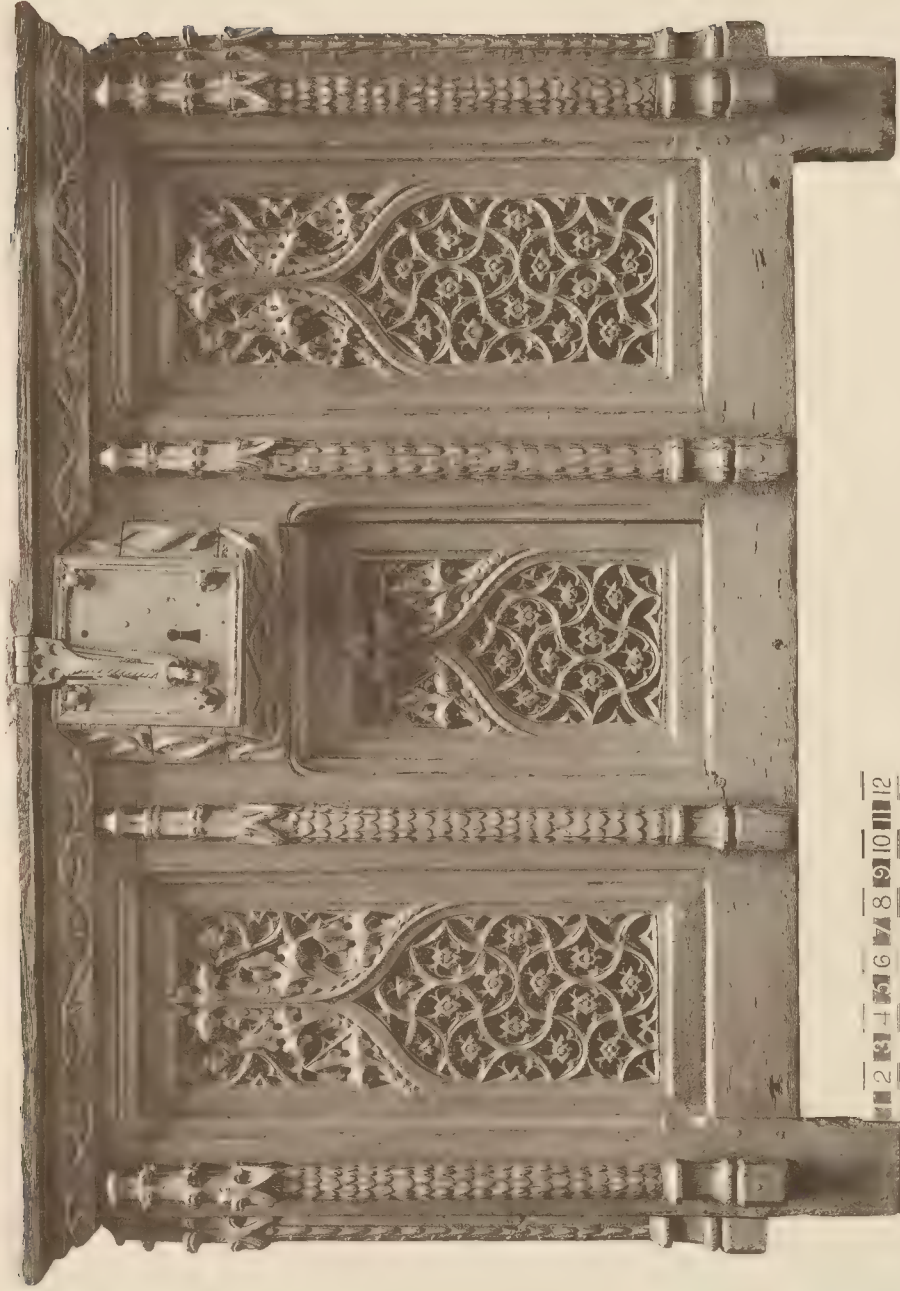
Oak Panel, decorated with Gothic Tracery and a Shield bearing the sacred Monogram.

H.  $23\frac{1}{4}$  in. W.  $9\frac{3}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 816 - 1895.



French, late 15th Century.



Oak Chest. Carved with a flamboyant Gothic design. Date about 1480. H. 2 ft. 7 in. L. 3 ft. 7 in. W. 2 ft.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 3739—1856.





Northern French, late 15th Century.



Coffer of Walnut Wood. The front is carved with Gothic Tracery beneath round-headed Arches (Top restored.)

H. 2 ft. 6 in. L. 5 ft. 8 in

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 494-1899.



French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Oak Door, with panels Carved with Gothic Tracery. H. 7 ft.  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 3 ft.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 770—1893.





French, late 15th Century.

Plate X.

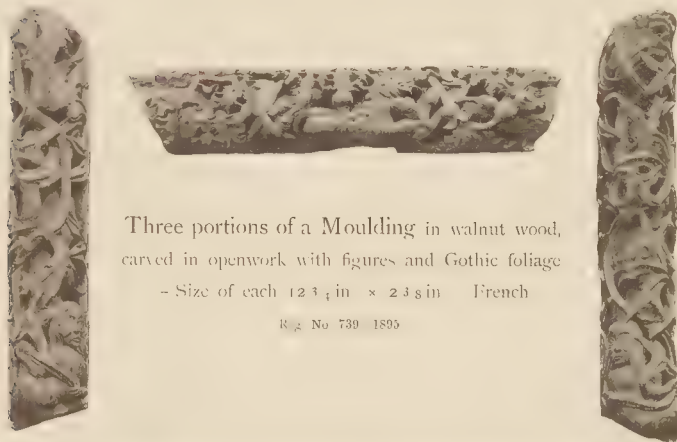


Exterior of a vestibule to a stair-case. H. 11 ft. W. 2 ft. 10 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 672A—1895.



French and German, late 15th Century.



Three portions of a Moulding in walnut wood,  
carved in openwork with figures and Gothic foliage

- Size of each 12  $\frac{3}{4}$  in.  $\times$  2  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. French

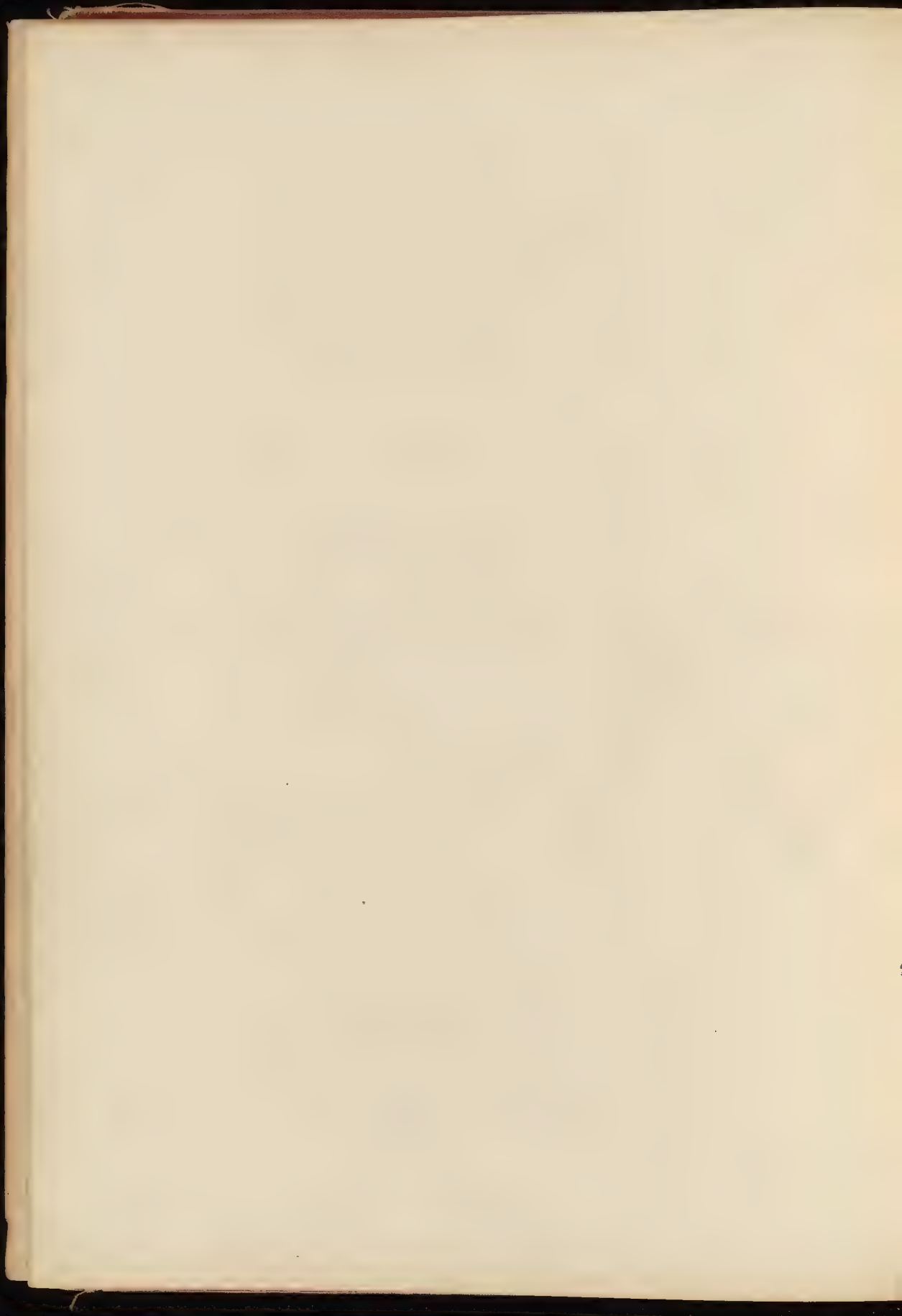
Reg. No. 739 1895



Cupboard door of oak, Carved with a shield of arms and Gothic foliage. (Lower rail of frame modern).

H. 23  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. W. 22  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. German.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 872 1895.



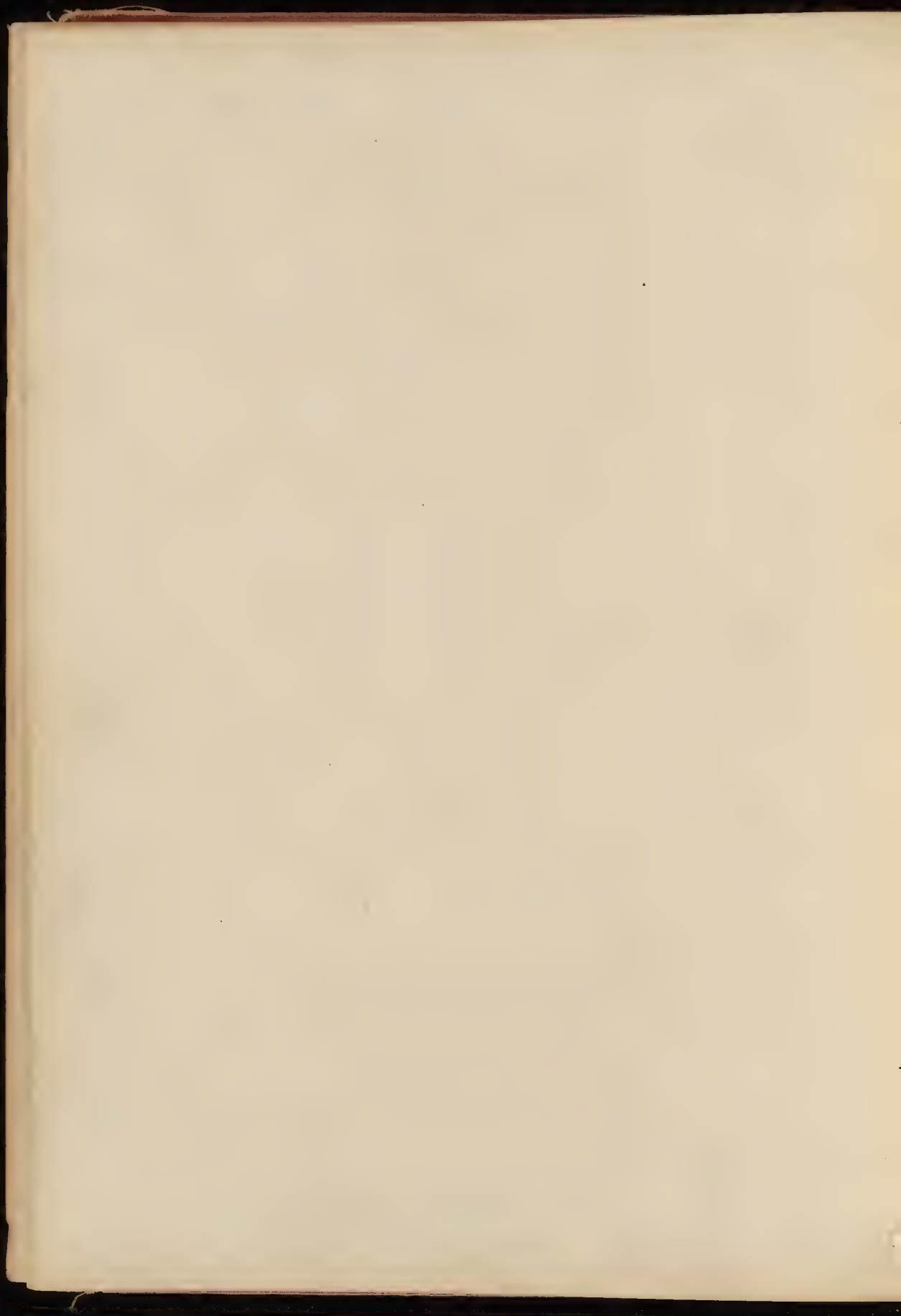


Northern French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

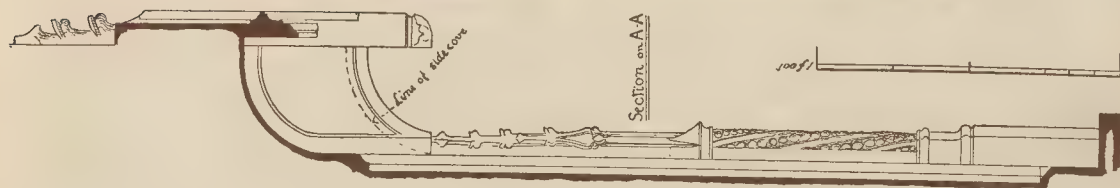


Carved Oak Door (framework modern). H. 7 ft. 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. W. 2 ft. 8 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 855-1895.



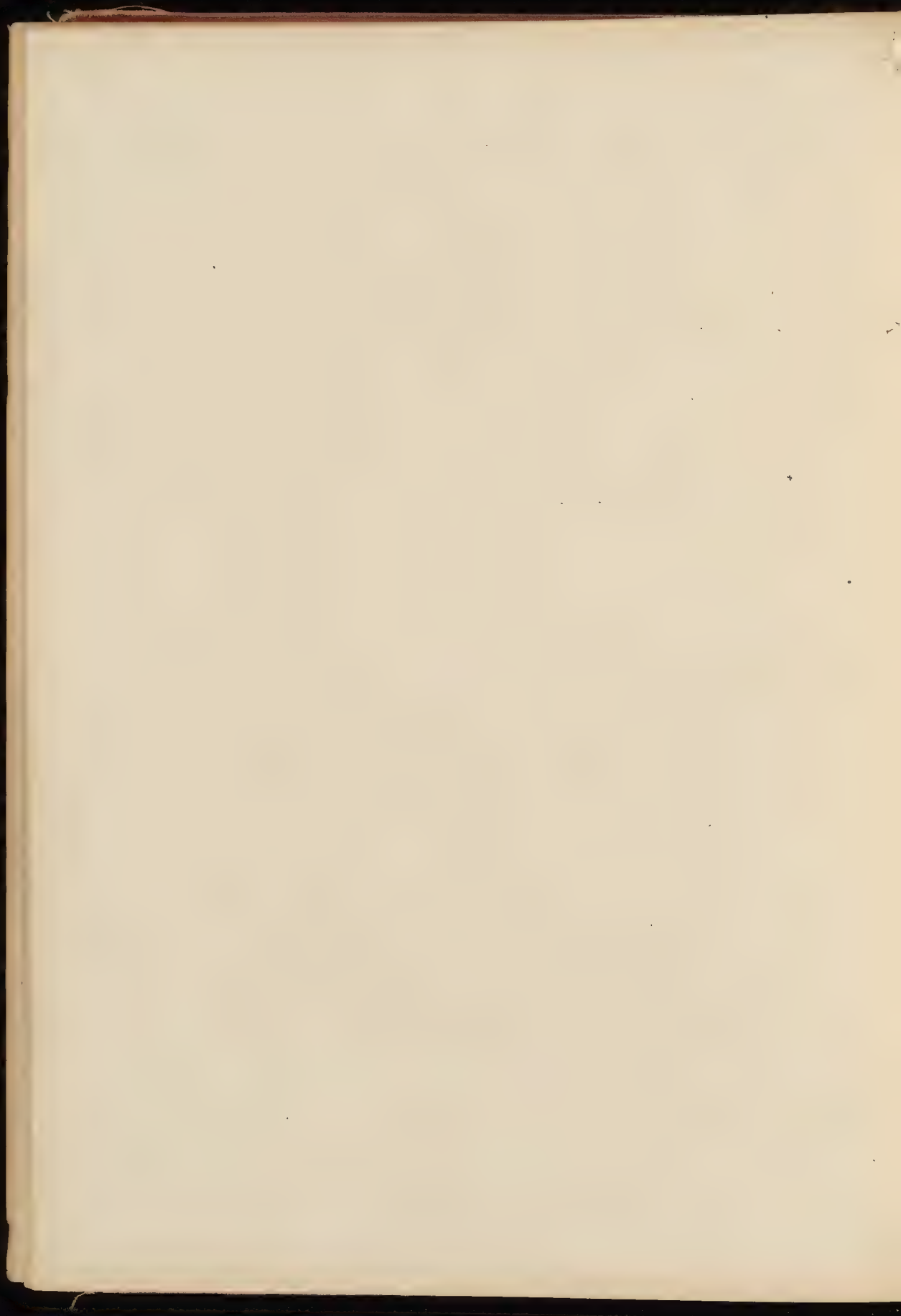
French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Portion of an Oak Retable. Carved with Gothic Tracery, Foliage and Shields of arms (restored) vertical Section on A A.

H. 3 ft. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 7 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum Reg. No. 84 1895.





French, late 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



Figure of a Monk. H  $19\frac{1}{4}$  in. W. 7 in. Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.

Fragment of a Gothic Canopy into which has been inserted a Renaissance Pulpit from which a Friar is preaching.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 492 1895.



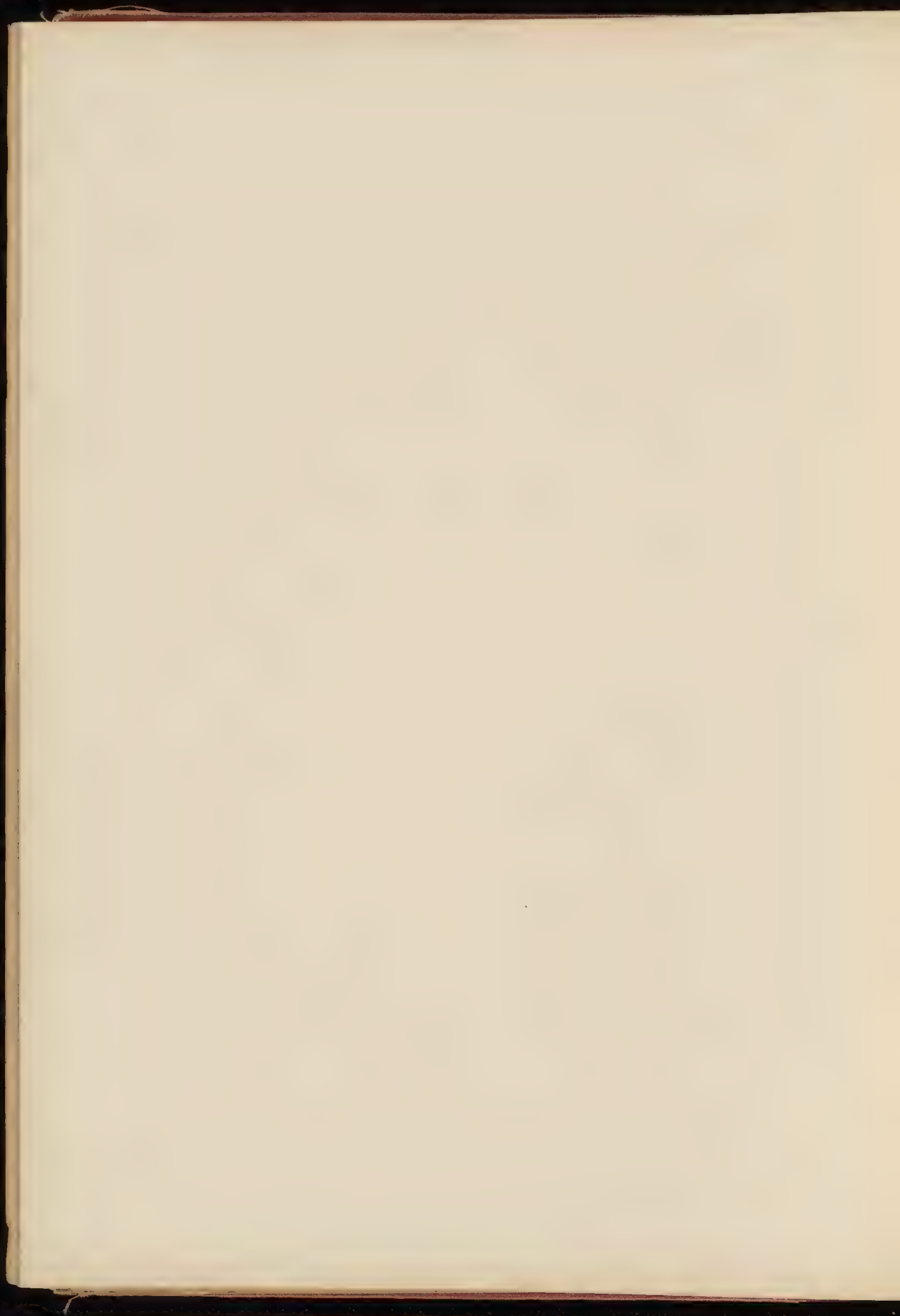
French, early 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

Period of Louis XII.



Carved Oak Door. H. (as shewn on plate) 3 ft. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. W. 1 ft 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 363—1892.



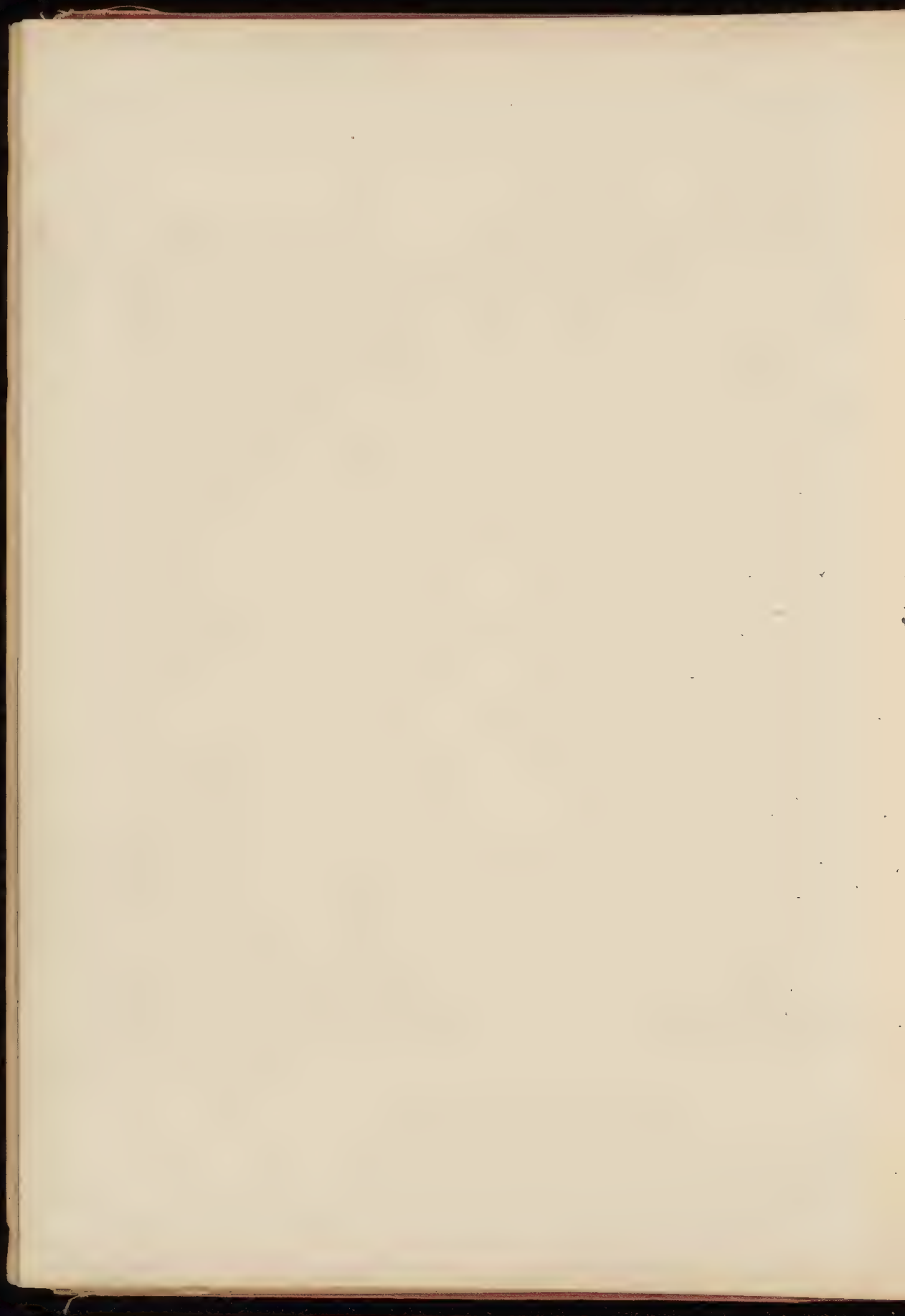


French, early 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Two Oak Panels. Carved in relief with conventional flower ornament H. 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  in W 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  in

The Corporation Art Gallery Glasgow.





Cupboard Doors. Carved Oak. Full size of each 4 ft. 3 in. by 20½ in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. Nos. 361, 362—1892.





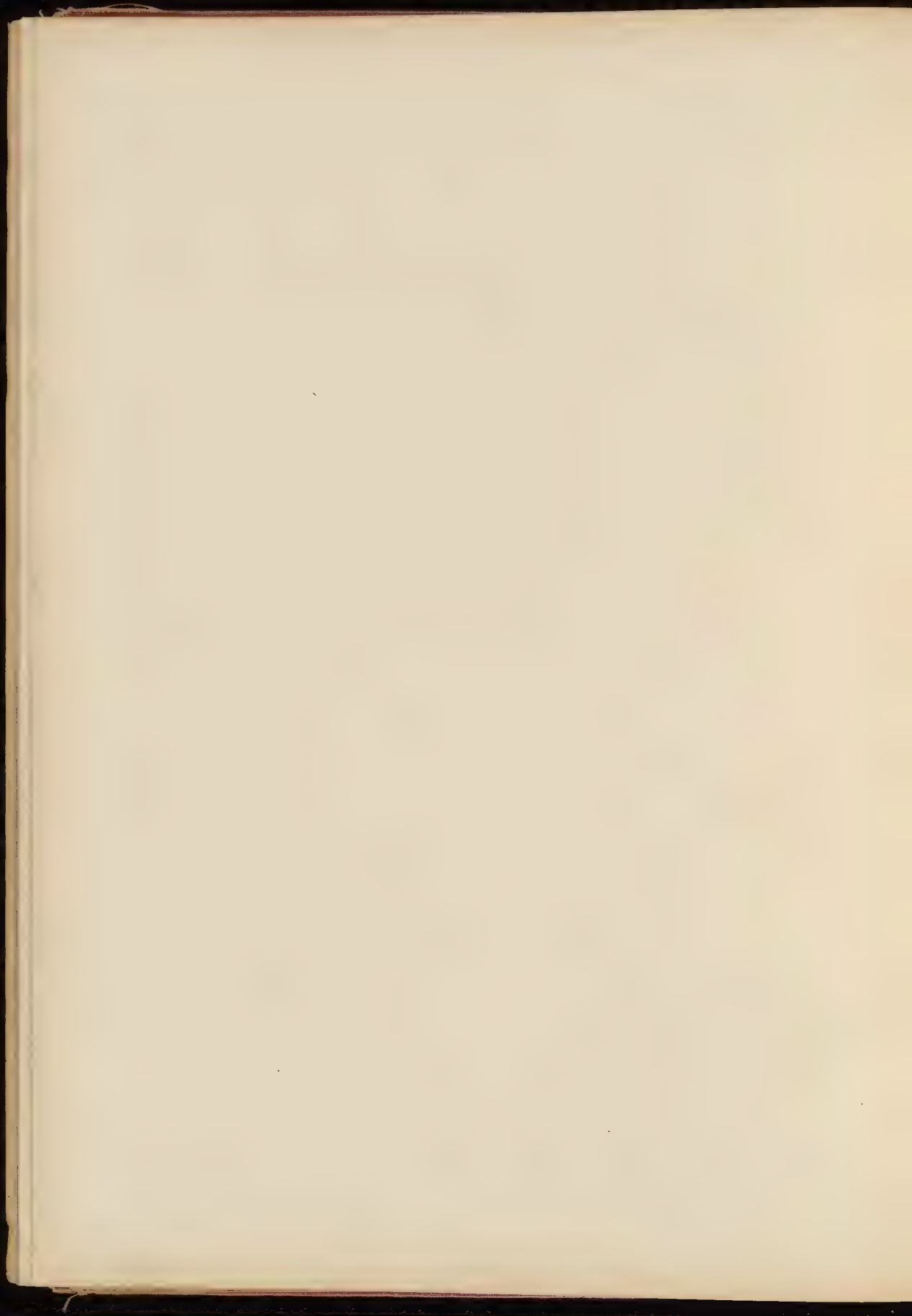


Portion of an Oak Border. Carved with bands and floral ornament. Reg. No S K M. 888 1895.

Oak Panel. Carved with floral scrolls terminating in human heads. In the Museum of Science and Art, Dublin.

Oak Panel. Carved with floral scrolls terminating in animals heads.

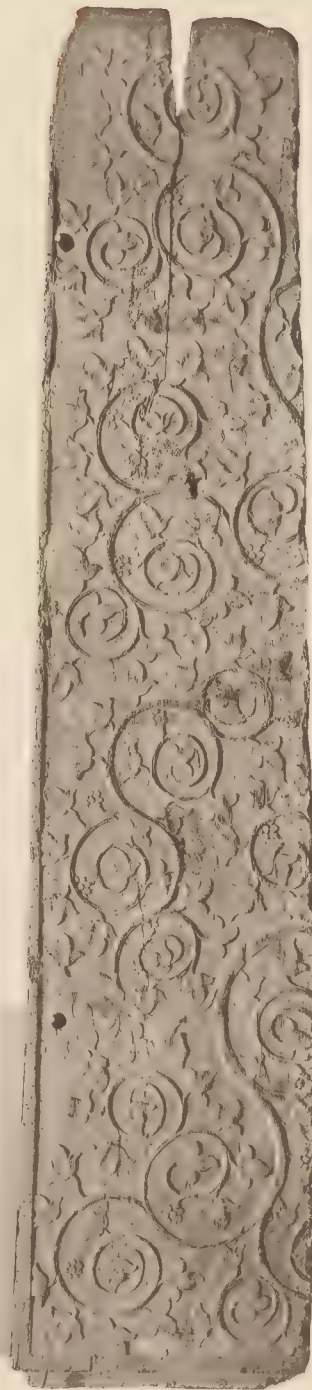
In the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh. (There are similar pieces in the South Kensington Museum.)



French. Early 16th Century.



22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

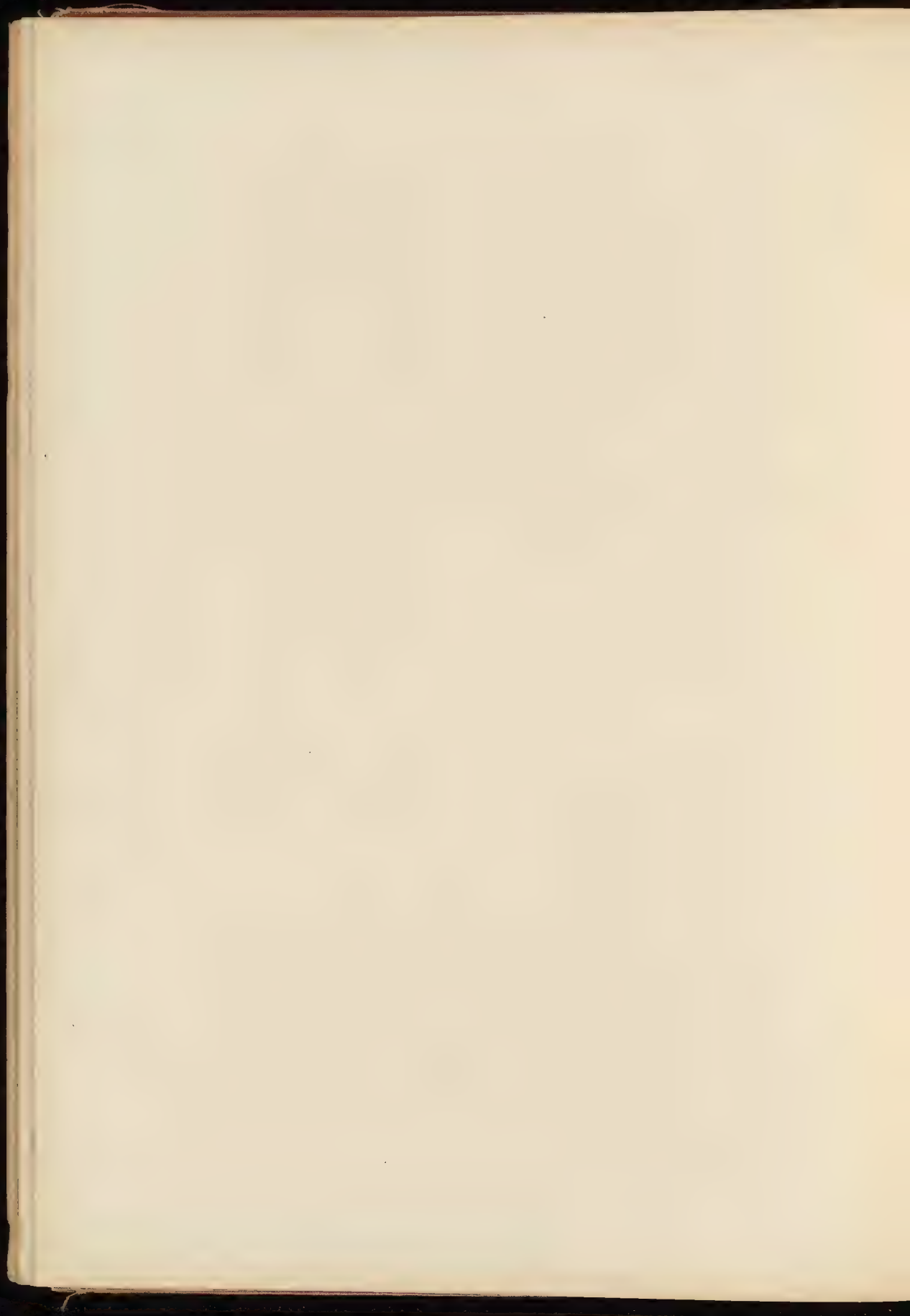


Front of a Box or Drawer. Walnut Wood. Carved with a cherub's head and floral scrolls. L. 23  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. W. 6  $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

South Kensington Museum Reg. No. 677 1895.

Portion of a Panel. Walnut Wood. Carved all over with floral scrolls. L. 4 ft. 1 in. W. 10  $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 684—1895.





French. 16th Century.



Door from a Cabinet. Walnut Wood. Auvergne. Early part of 16th Century.  
H.  $14\frac{1}{2}$  in. W.  $13\frac{3}{8}$  in. South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 829—1895.

Column from a Cabinet. Walnut Wood. Lyons. Middle of 16th Century.  
H.  $26\frac{1}{2}$  in. Diameter across flutes  $3\frac{1}{4}$  in.  
South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 749—1895.



Panel from a Niche. Walnut Wood. Auvergne. Middle of 16th Century. H.  $9\frac{1}{8}$  in. W.  $13\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.



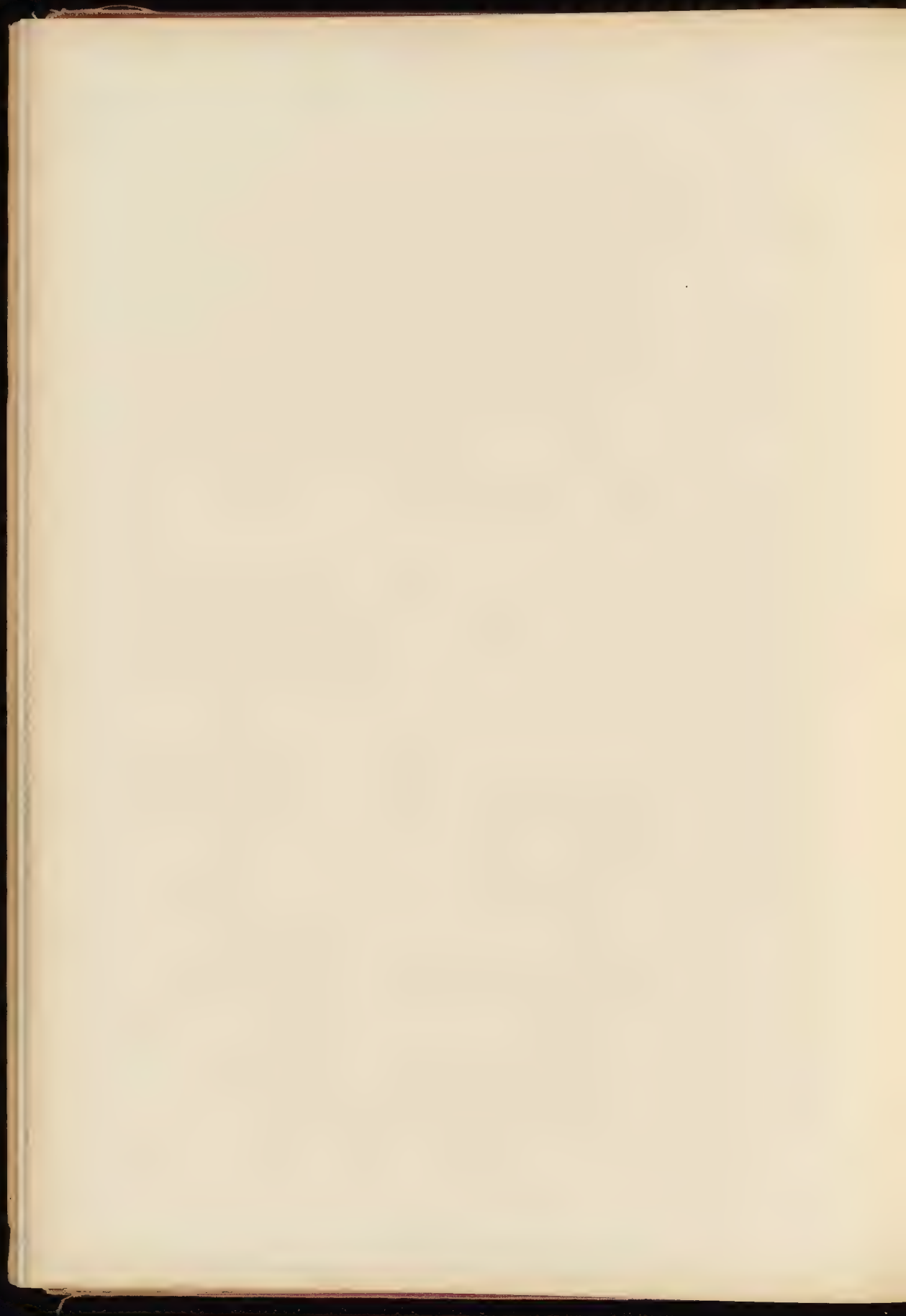
French, 16th Century.



Frieze of a Chimney piece. Oak. (The Mouldings are modern). Early 16th Century. L. (as shewn in collotype) 5 ft. 4½ in. W. 11 in. South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 818—1896.

Two Oak Panels. Carved with a shield of arms surmounted by a demi figure of a woman holding a child. Middle 16th Century. H. 2 ft. 7 in. W. 17¼ in. South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 856—1895.

Panel. Oak. Carved with strapwork and floral ornament. Lyons. Middle of 16th Century. H. 2 ft. 7 in. W. 7½ in. Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.



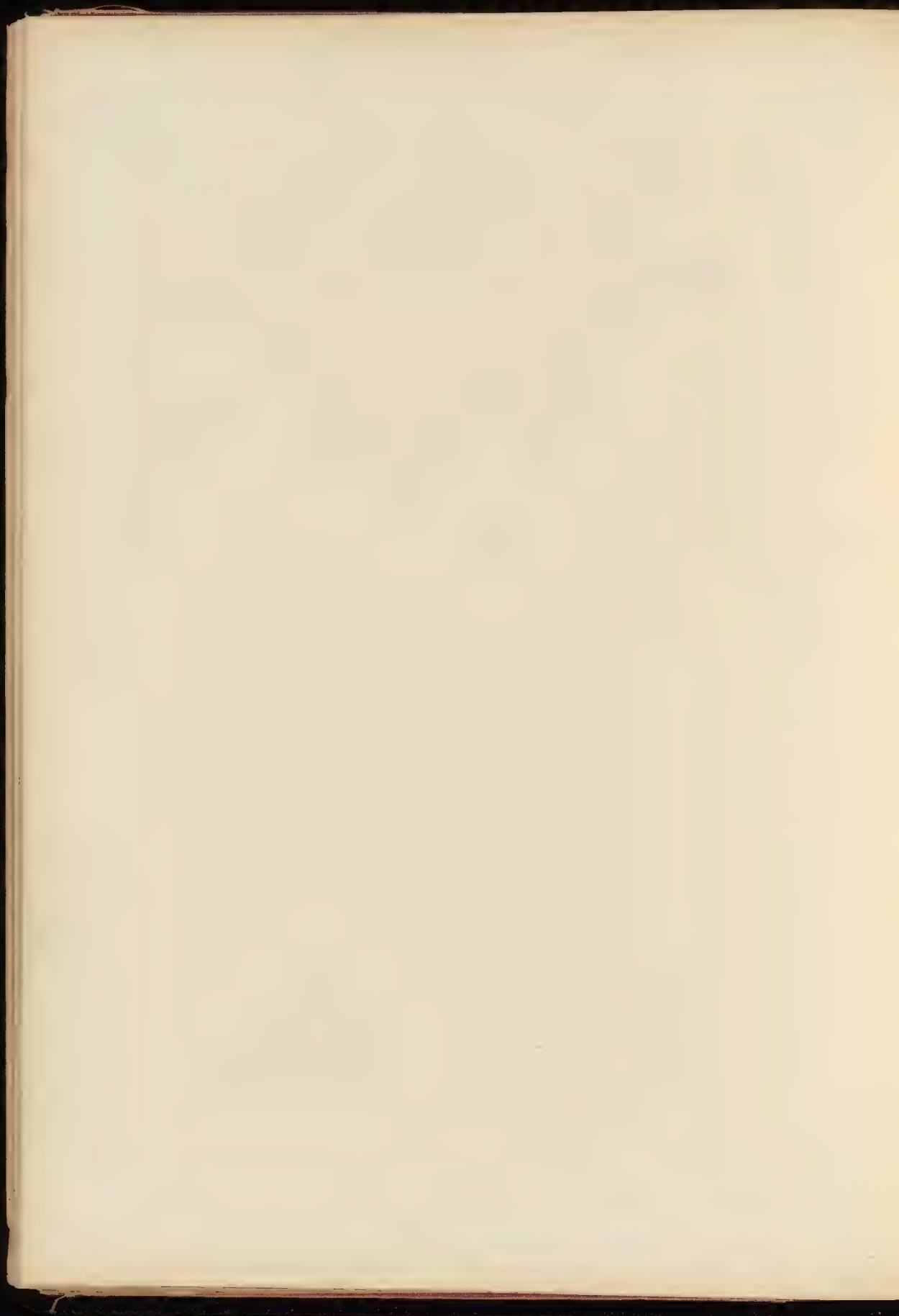


French. Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Balustrade. Walnut Wood. The Baluster shaped columns are carved with Masks and Floral ornament.  
H. 6 ft. 2 in. W. 3 ft. 6 in (as shewn in collotype).

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 485—1895.



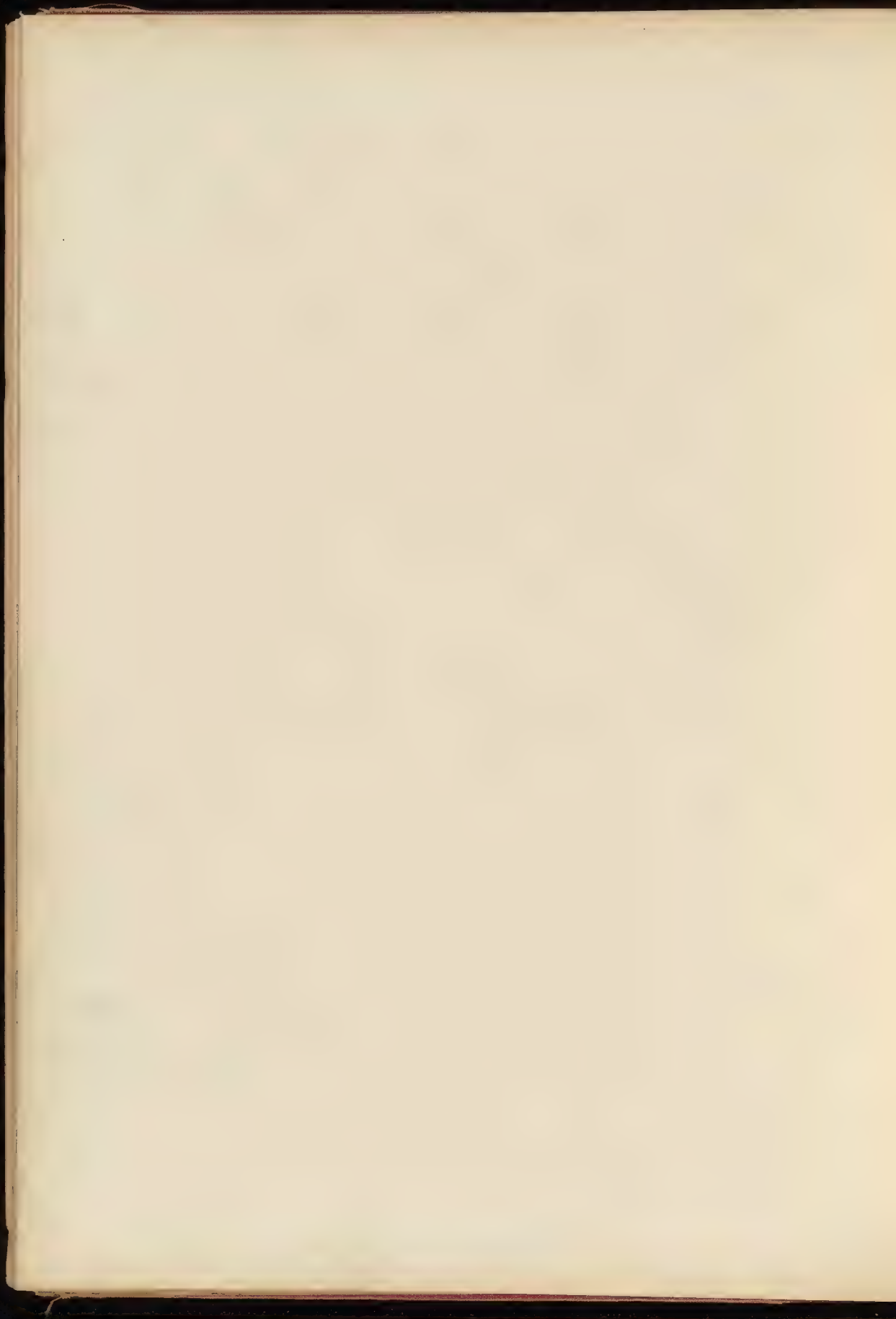
French. Middle of 16th Century.



Oak Coffin. Carved with a Lion's Mask, Cartouche and Floral ornament. For Sections etc. See Plate XXIV.

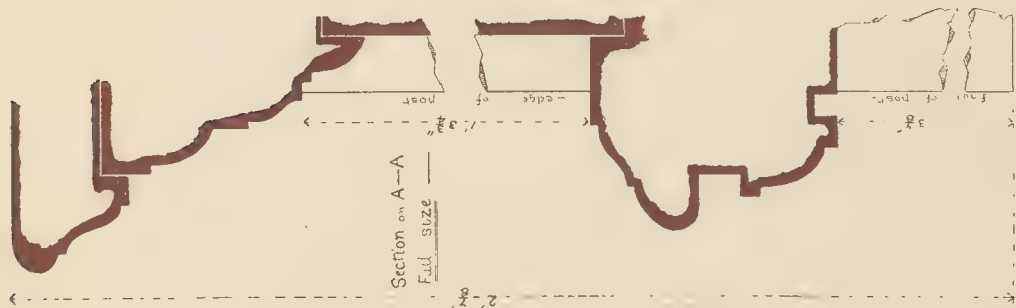
H. 2 ft. 1 in. W. 1 ft. 3  $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum Reg. No. 479-1805



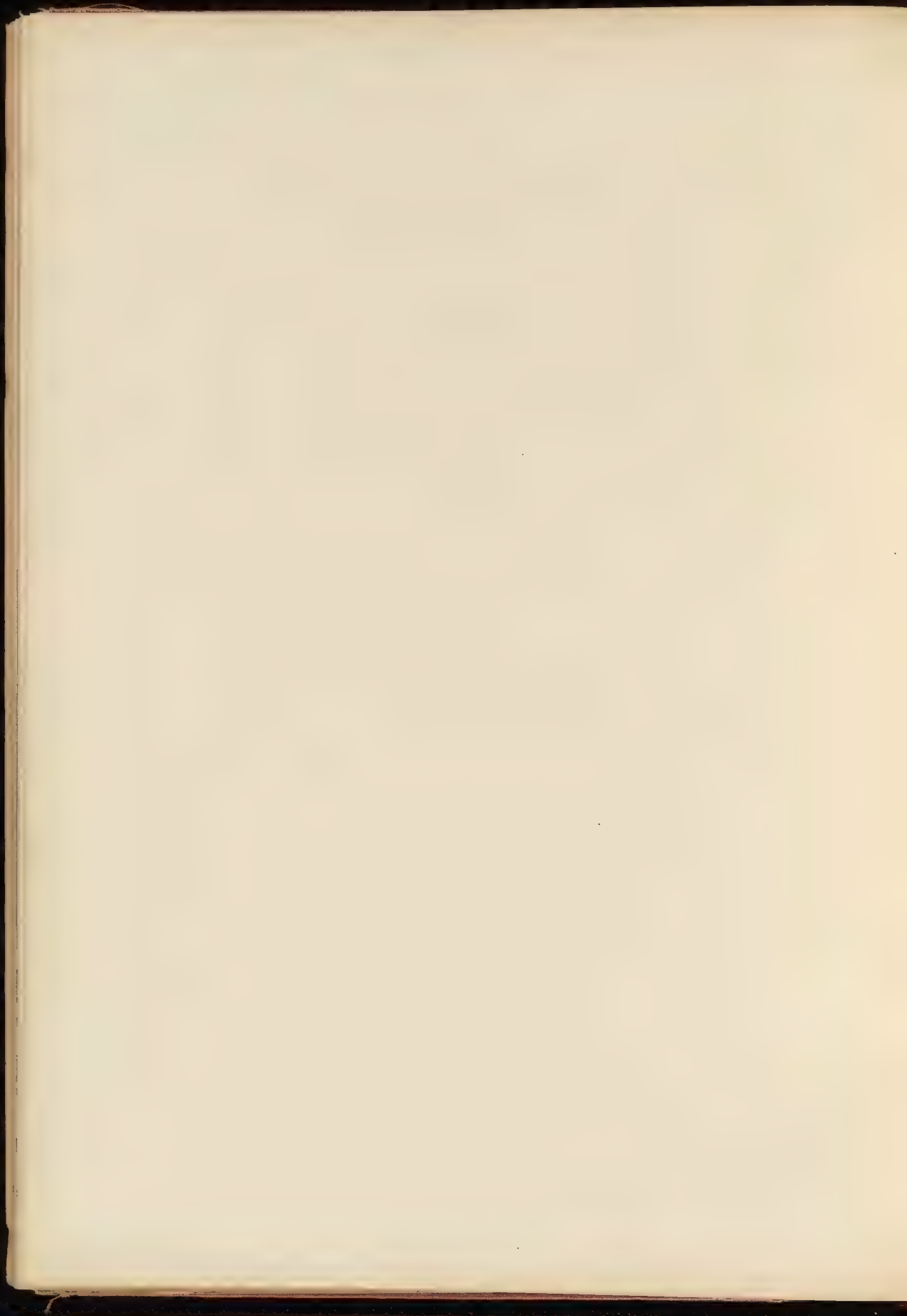


French, Middle of 16th Century.



End of an Oak Coffer. See Plate XXIII. H. 2 ft. 1 in. W. 1 ft. 3 1/4 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 673-1805



French, Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

Plate XXV.



Two Strapwork Panels. H. 1 ft. 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 1 ft. 6 in.

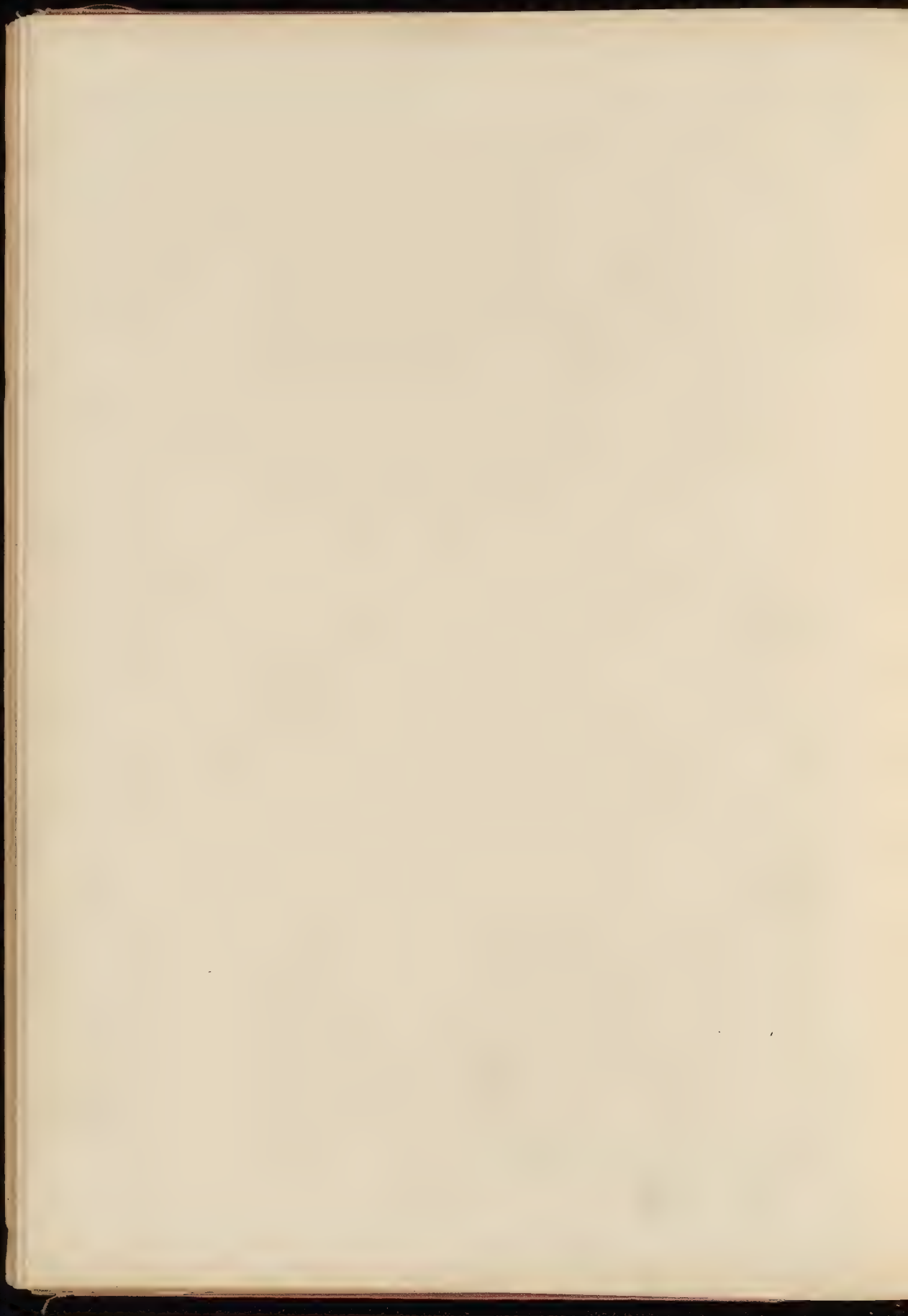
The Corporation Art Galleries, Glasgow.







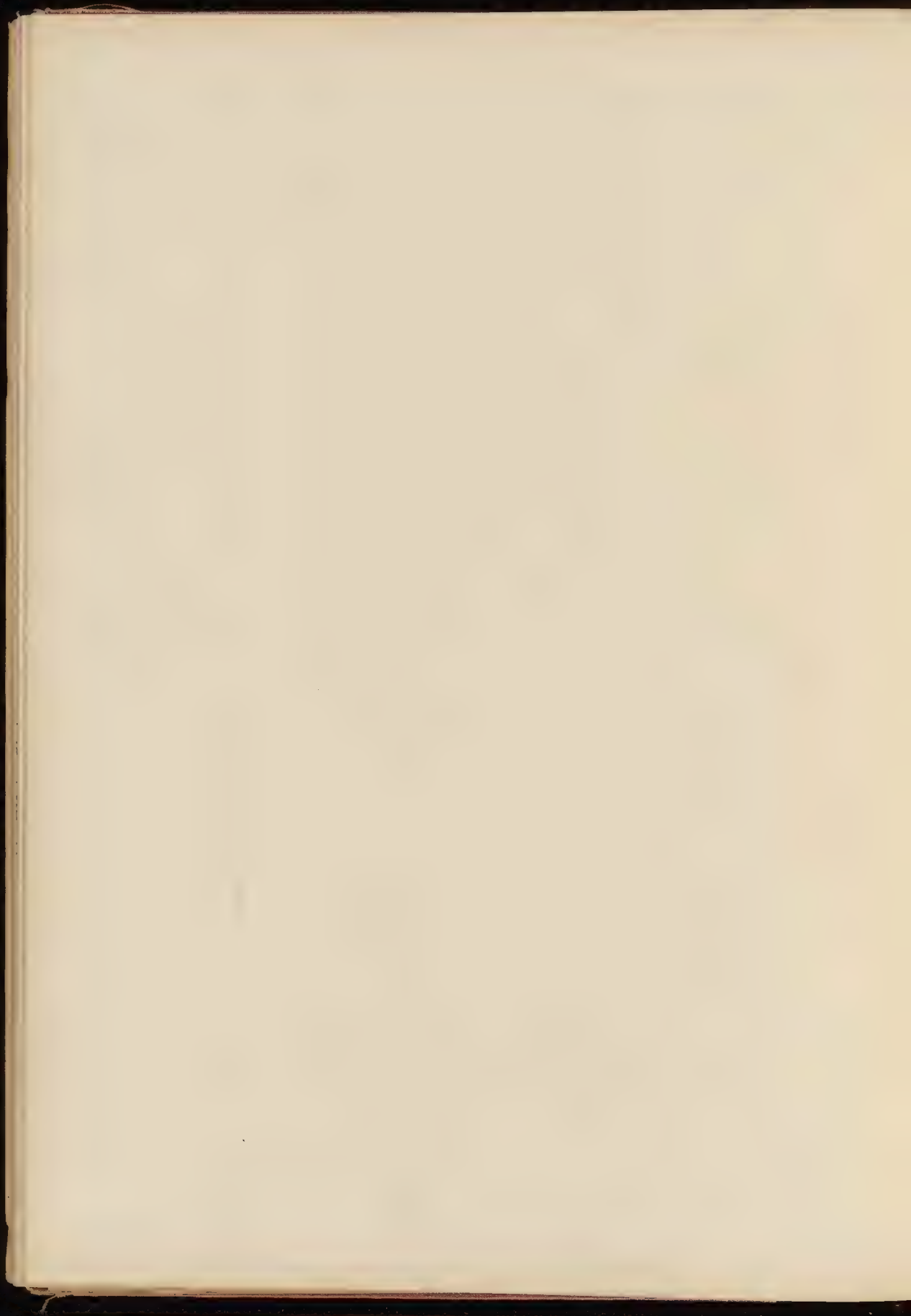
Walnut Wood Door. The panels carved with scrollwork in very low relief and modelled. Horizontal Section through the Muntin and the Mouldings that lead up to carved panel. H. 5 ft. 7 in. W. 2 ft. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.





Oak Door and Architrave. The panels carved with strapwork in very low relief. The Frieze is modern and not in character with the rest of the work. Horizontal Section through the Architrave, Stile and Mouldings that lead up to panel. H. 7 ft.  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 3 ft.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 1734—1892.





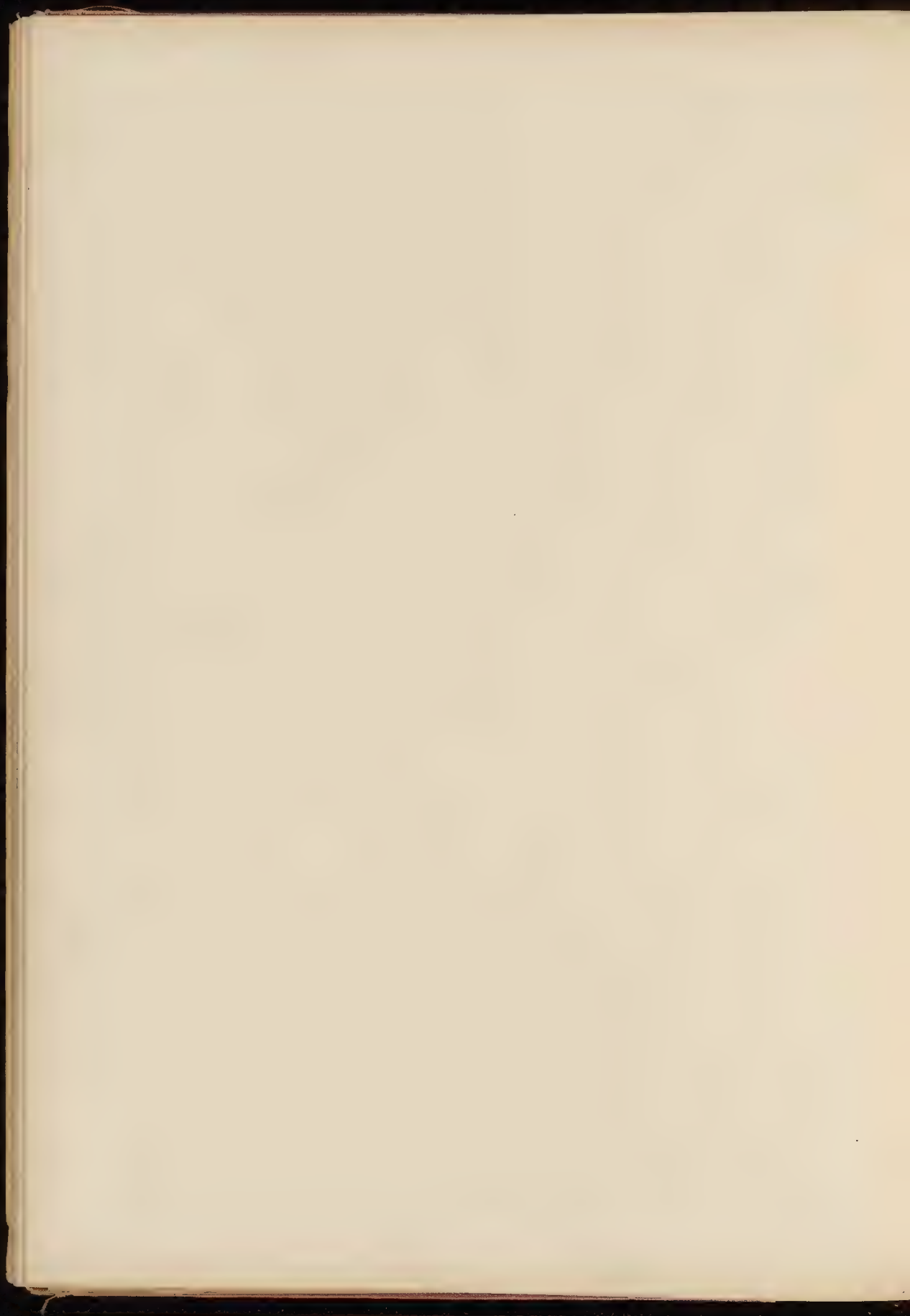
Line of carving

Horizontal section through middle part of framing

Scale full size



**Door.** From a Plaster Cast of a Walnut Door in the Collection of Monsieur Duseigneur, Paris. The panels are carved with strapwork in very low relief and delicately modelled. Horizontal Section through the Muntin and Mouldings that lead up to carved panel. H. 6 ft 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. W. 2 ft 6 in.

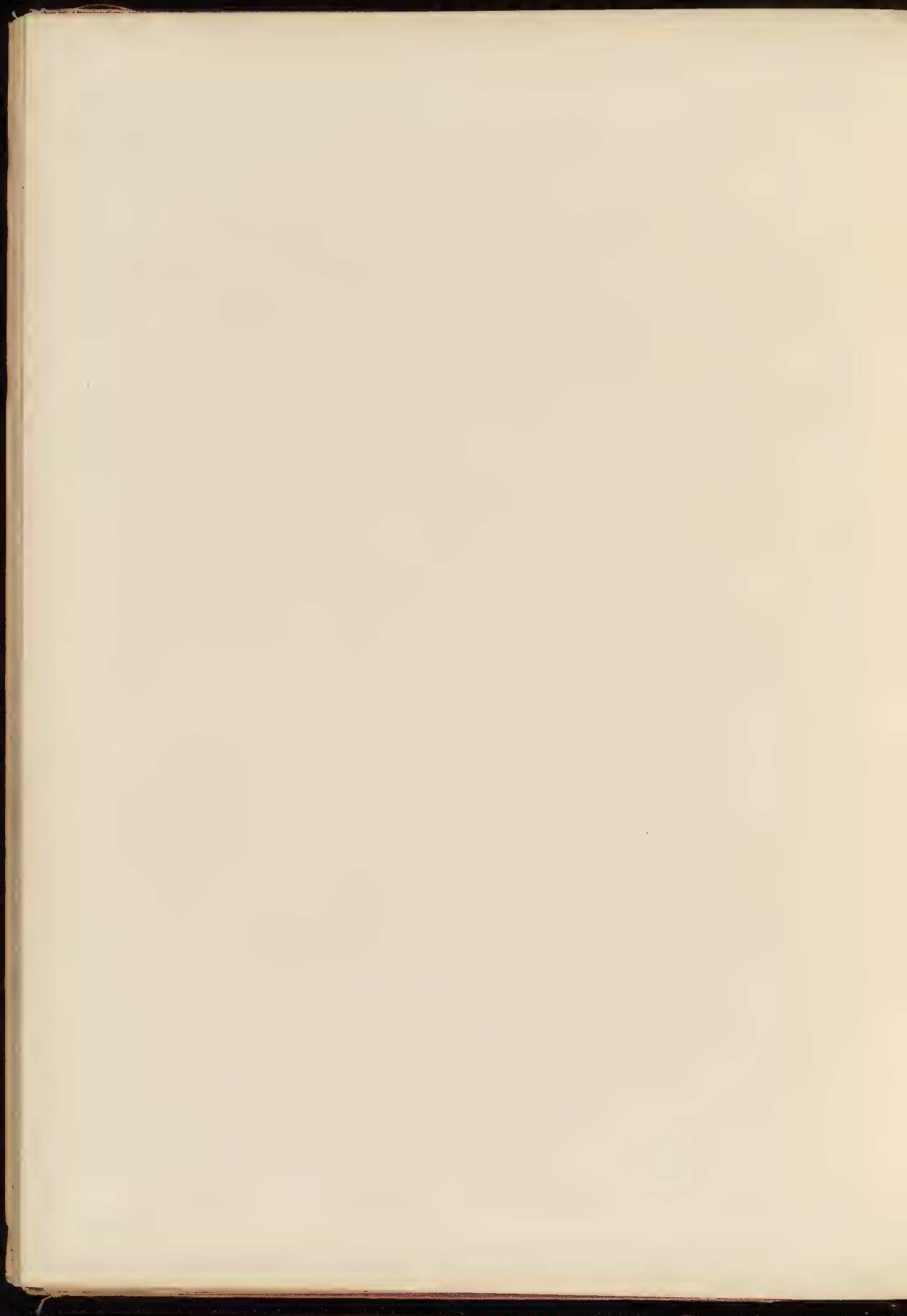


French (Lyons). Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Chair. Walnut Wood. The panel at the back is carved with strapwork and the bands interlaced.  
See Plate XXX. H. 3 ft. 4 in. W. 18½ in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 720—1895.



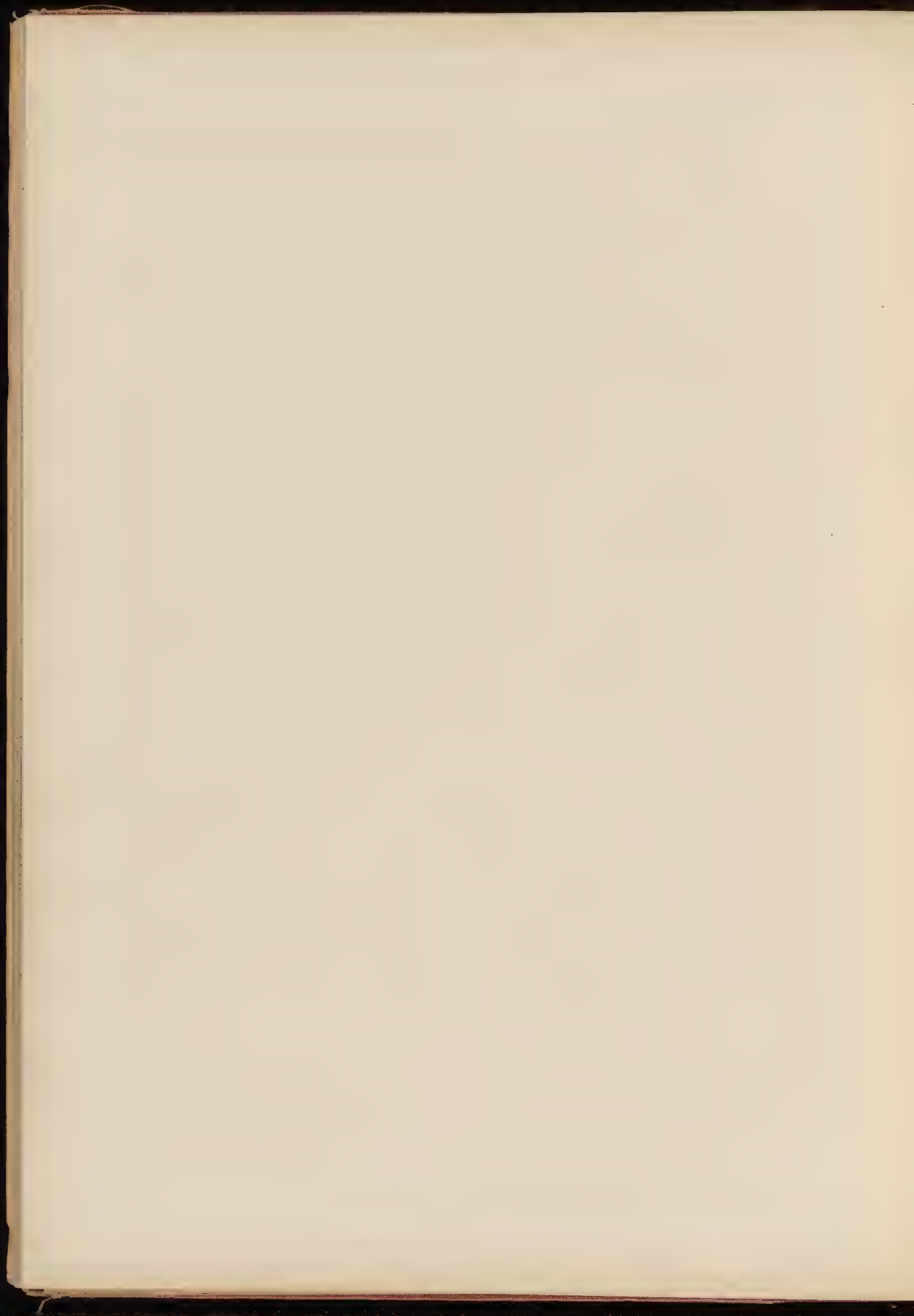


French (Lyons). Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Back of Chair given on Plate XXIX. Section giving Mouldings and relief of carving. H. 21 in. W. 17 in

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 720—1895.



French (Lyons). Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

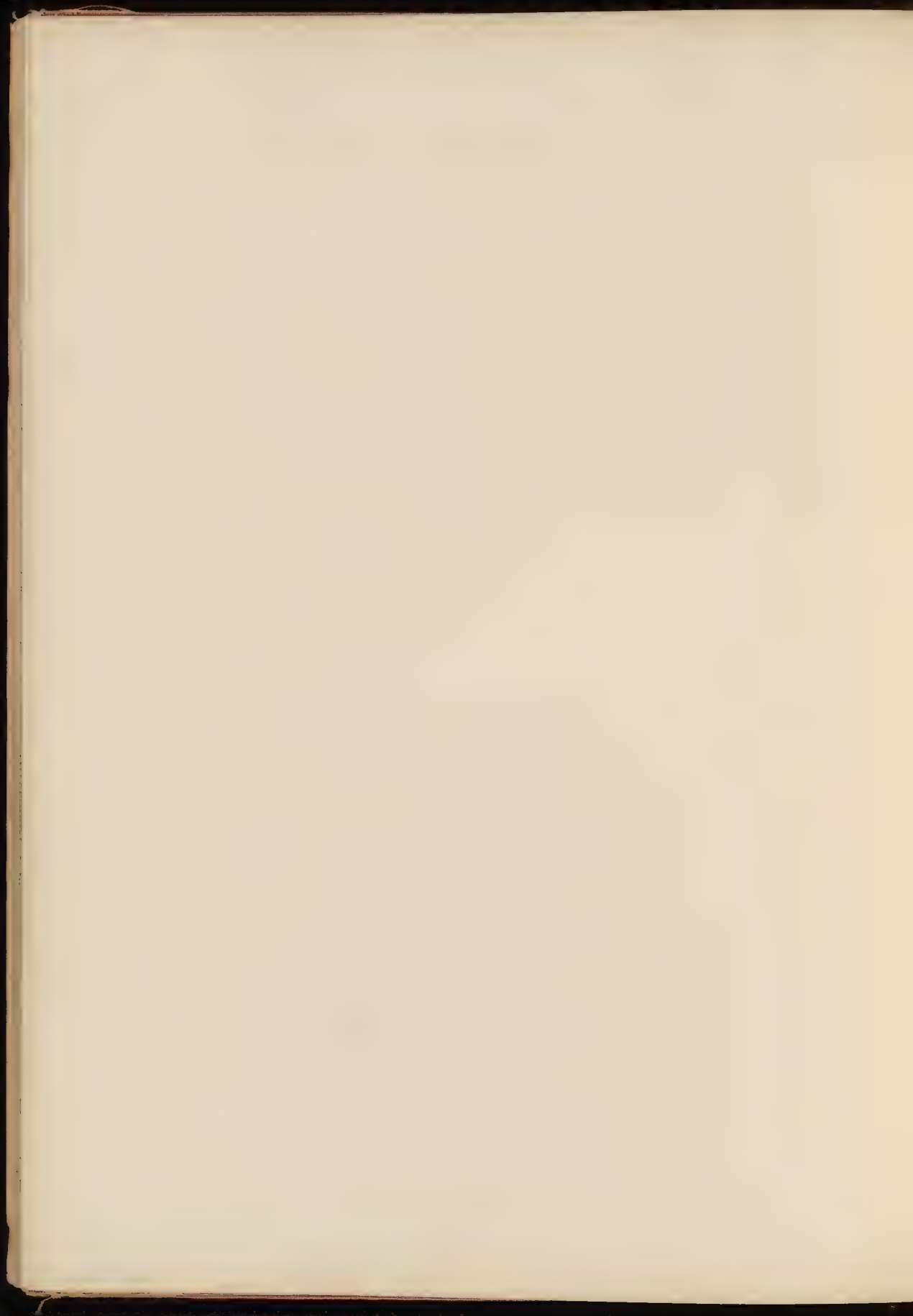


A —



Walnut Panel. Carved in low relief with floral Ornament and Strapwork — Section giving Mouldings and relief of carving. H. 2 ft. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. W. 1 ft. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 711—1895.





French (Auvergne). Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Cupboard Doors. Oak. Carved with heads within Medallions. The upper panels are in the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh. Sight measure of carved panel, H. 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 10 in. The lower panels, H. 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. 9 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 799 -1895.



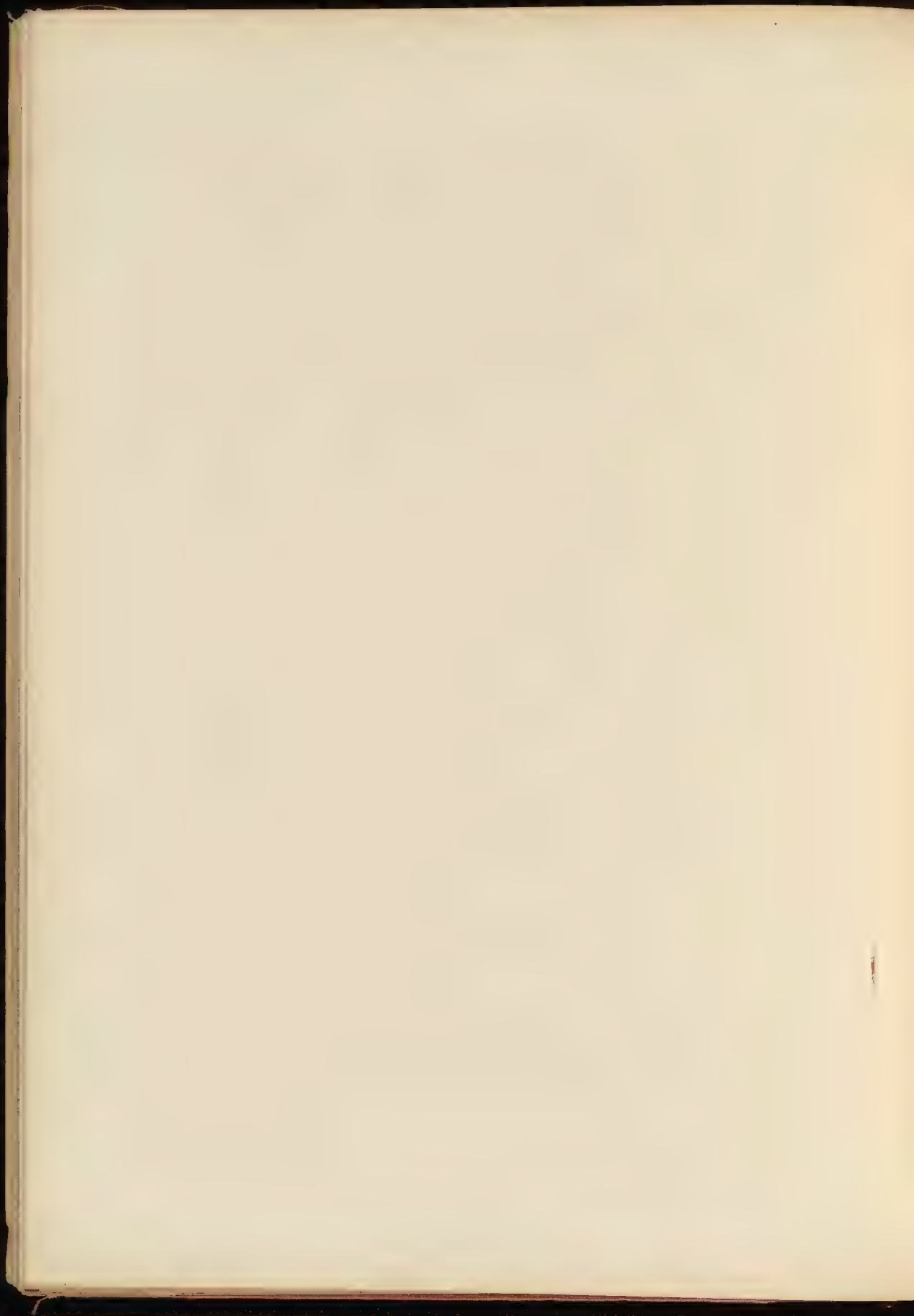
French. Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

123456789101112



Oak Door. The panels are carved with Cartouches outlined by interlacing bands with Floral ornament above and below. H. 4 ft. 6 in. W. 3 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

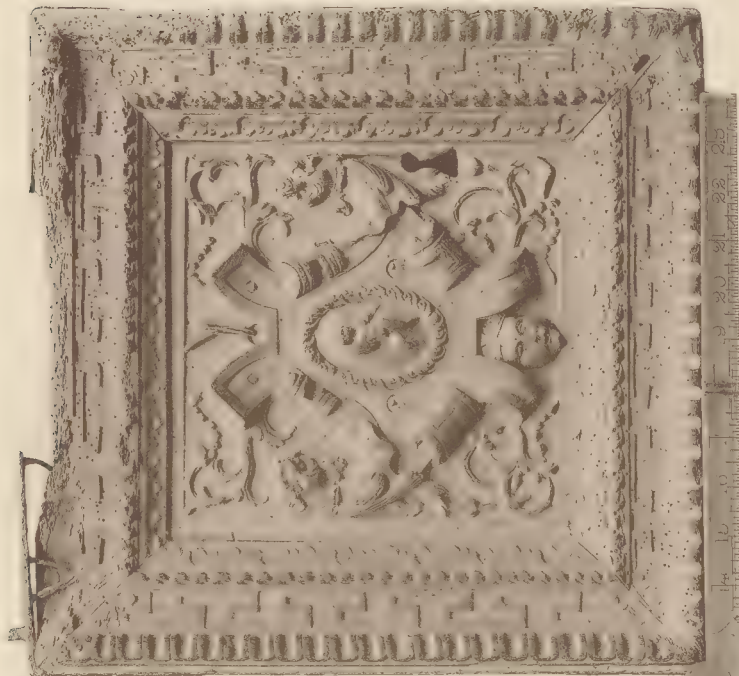
South Kensington Museum Reg. No. 801 1895





# French, 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

Section through A. full size



Cupboard Door. Oak. Carved with strapwork. Middle of 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

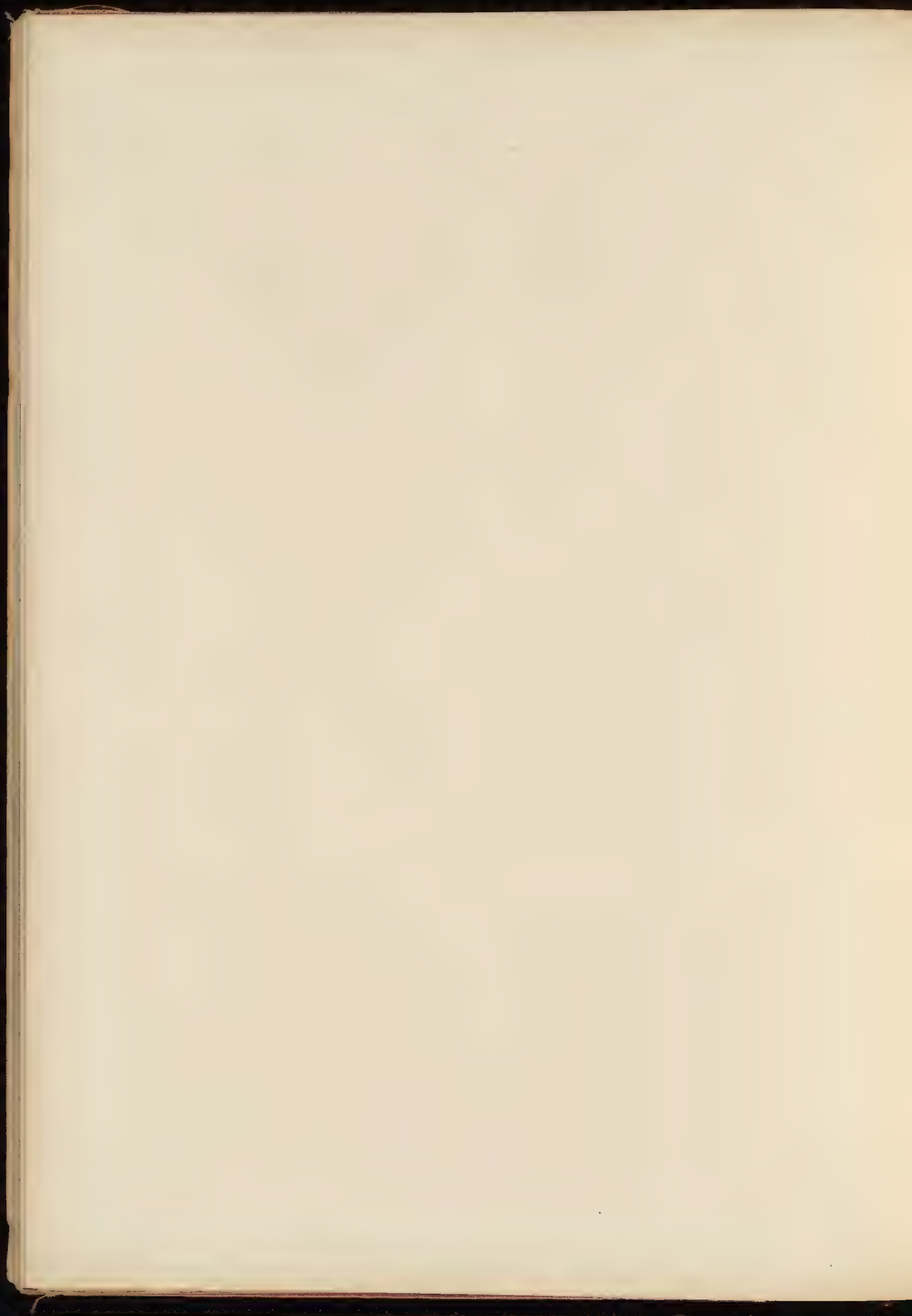
South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 866 1895.

Door from a Cabinet. Walnut Wood. Carved with a strapwork Cartouche and Floral scrolls.

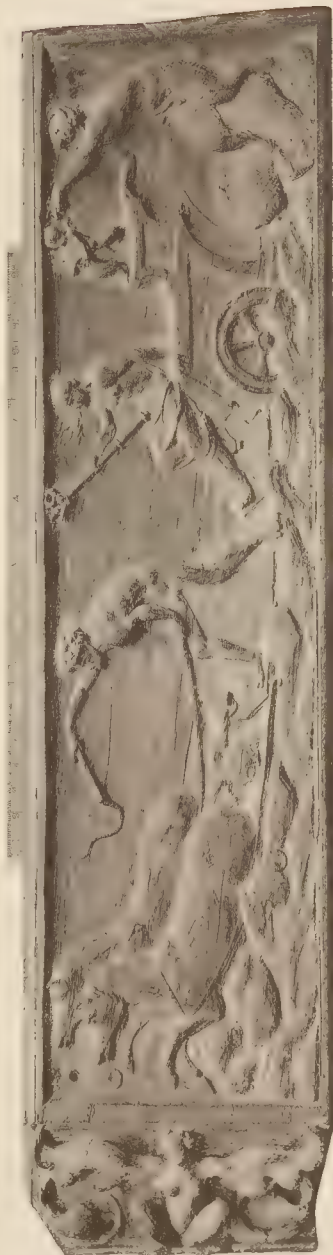
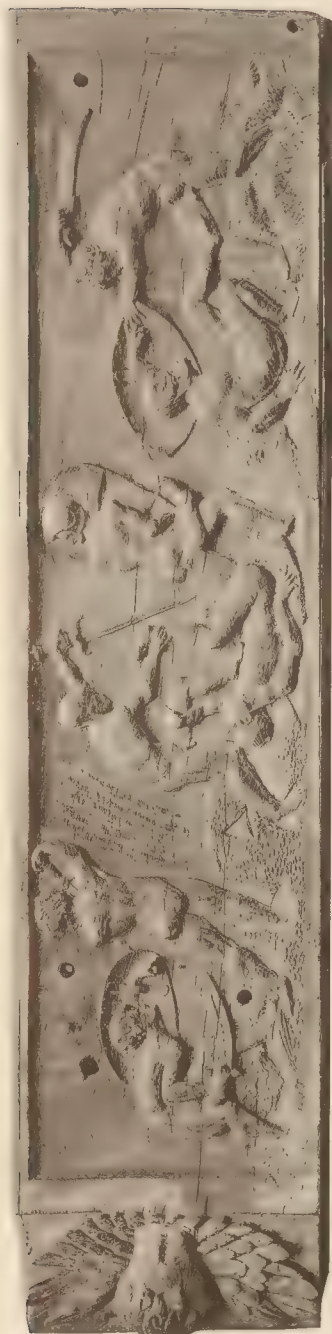
Late 16<sup>th</sup> Century. 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. square.

Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.





French. Middle of 16th Century.



Two Carved Oak Corbels. One a battle subject, the other a bacchanalian scene. H. 4 ft. 3 in. W. 12 1/2 in.

H. 3 ft. 11 3/4 in. W. 12 in.

South Kensington Museum Reg. Nos. 756 757-1895.



French, 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



Top left panel, carved with strapwork and floral ornament. Walnut Wood.  
Late 16<sup>th</sup> Century. H. 2 ft. 1½ in. W. 8¾ in.  
The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow.

On the right, Cartouche with strapwork bands. Walnut Wood. H. 19½ in. W. 10¾ in.  
Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh.

Panel, carved with strapwork and a Mask. Walnut Wood. H. 25¼ in. W. 17¾ in.  
South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 876—1895.





*With the sanction of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education.*

# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS

PRINTED IN COLLOTYPE FROM PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAKEN FROM  
THE CARVINGS DIRECT

EDITED BY

ELEANOR ROWE

AUTHOR OF 'HINTS ON WOOD CARVING'; 'HINTS ON CHIP CARVING'; 'STUDIES FROM THE MUSEUMS'; ETC.

MANAGER OF THE SCHOOL OF ART WOOD CARVING, SOUTH KENSINGTON

THIRD SERIES

SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES



B. T. BATSFORD, 94 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON

1897



## P R E F A C E .

THE First and Second Series of this work comprise Gothic and Renaissance examples of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This, the Third Series, is composed of carvings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the styles usually known as Louis XIV., Louis XV. and Louis XVI. This classification is generally admitted to be very unsatisfactory, but it is doubtful if one would not add to the difficulties by increasing the number of styles.

A writer in the 'Dictionary of Architecture,' issued by the Architectural Publication Society, says, the only logical thing to do is to subdivide the reign of Louis XIV. into six periods, that of Louis XV. into eight, and that of Louis XVI. into three, calling each after the artist or the person whose influence was paramount. All I would ask the student to bear in mind is, that in the early, middle, and late periods of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., distinct varieties are to be found, which should be duly noticed. On no point of French art is there so much difference of opinion, as on the dates to be assigned to the carvings of these reigns. Not only do experts take entirely different views, but hardly any two books agree on the subject, except, of course, in cases that can be proved by documentary evidence. The examples here selected have been chosen with a view to make known the carvings in our national museums rather than to give a chronological series of the styles, which our collections do not admit of. This, however, should in no way detract from their value to the student, for whose further assistance a list of the books consulted will be found at the end of the letterpress.

ELEANOR ROWE.

46 PEMBROKE ROAD, W.  
*December 1896.*



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## CHRONOLOGY.

France.		England.
LOUIS XIII. 1610.		JAMES I. 1603.
	THIRTY YEARS' WAR. 1618-1648.	CHARLES I. 1625.
LOUIS XIV. 1643.		
"	PEACE OF WESTPHALIA. 1648.	THE PROTECTORATE OLIVER CROMWELL } 1649.
"		CHARLES II. 1660.
"		JAMES II. 1685.
"		WILLIAM & MARY. 1688.
"		ANNE. 1702.
	BATTLE OF BLENHEIM. 1702.	
	" RAMILIES. 1706.	
	" OUDENARDE. 1708.	
	" MALPLAQUET. 1709.	
	DISCOVERY OF HERCULANEUM. 1713.	
LOUIS XV. 1715.		GEORGE I. 1714.
"		GEORGE II. 1727.
	PEACE OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE. 1748.	
	DISCOVERY OF POMPEII. 1750.	
	SEVEN YEARS' WAR. 1756.	
		GEORGE III. 1760.
	PEACE OF PARIS. 1763.	
LOUIS XVI. 1771.		"
	AMERICAN WAR. 1775.	
	THE PEACE OF VERSAILLES. 1783.	}
	INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES.	
THE REPUBLIC. 1793.		

# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

OF THE

## SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

SELECTED FROM OUR NATIONAL MUSEUMS.

---

IN preparing a short sketch of a large and complicated subject it is difficult to judge which points will be the most useful to students, and I can only hope to suggest a method of study which can be worked out by those who desire to possess a fuller knowledge of the styles which prevailed during the reigns of Louis XIV., XV. and XVI.

*Firstly.* Read the contemporary history.

*Secondly.* Make a list of the leading architects and sculptors of each reign, noting any information that is obtainable about them.

*Thirdly.* Consult the best books giving illustrations of the various styles, with the designs of some of the well known men, and examine the characteristics of each.

No books or illustrations, however, can supply the knowledge to be gained from a study of the buildings themselves, and nowhere can the architecture and the interior decorations of these periods be better studied than at the palace of Versailles and the "Grand" and "Petit Trianon."

A hunting box built at Versailles by Louis XIII. in 1632, formed the nucleus of the palace, which was begun in 1661 from plans supplied by the architect Le Vau. He was succeeded in 1670 by Jean Hardouin Mansart, who completed the building in 1680, although the king had taken up his residence there in 1672. In 1699 Mansart began the chapel, which was finished by Robert de Cotte in 1710. The theatre was built by J. A. Gabriel, 1753-70, and also part of the wing near the chapel, including the royal banqueting room. The whole of the interior was completely rearranged and redecorated under Louis Philippe, when a great deal of the carved wood panelling was taken down.

Adjacent to the palace is the "Grand Trianon," begun by Jean Hardouin Mansart in 1687, continued by Robert de Cotte, and by him completed in 1708. Here, in the dainty boudoir of Madame de Maintenon, whom Louis had married in 1685, the king hoped to find rest from the fatigues of the incessant court ceremonials, for which in his declining years he had neither health nor inclination.

"Le Petit Trianon" was built by Gabriel, in 1766, for Louis XV., who, a few years before his death, presented it to his grandson, the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XVI. It was here that the unfortunate Marie Antoinette passed the happiest years of her life.

The second issue of this series of selections was carried down to the death of Henry IV., who was succeeded by his son, Louis XIII., a child of nine, and Marie de Medicis was made

Regent. In 1624 Cardinal Richelieu, a man of immense power and inordinate ambition, was appointed minister. He it was who built the Palais Cardinal, which was so lavishly furnished and decorated that in order to conciliate the king, who, it appears, was jealous of so much magnificence, Richelieu presented it to his royal master. After the death of Louis XIII. the ex-queen, Anne of Austria, resided there, and it was called the Palais Royal.

The Renaissance style continued throughout the reign of Louis XIII. and the early part of Louis XIV., although it was much heavier and very different from what it was in the golden age of Francis I., each year bringing it nearer to the recognised style of Louis XIV.

Some interesting carving executed during the reign of Louis XIII. may be seen in the chapel at Fontainebleau, especially the side screens. The carving is delicate and the proportions of the architectural details are graceful and refined. The frieze round the chapel is composed of swags of fruit and flowers intercharged with cartouches. There are also some fine oak doors at the top of the grand staircase leading to the large gallery of Francis I. The carving on these is a little heavy, but there is a quiet dignity about them quite in harmony with their surroundings.

During the early part of the seventeenth century fresh influences were at work and a new fashion in furniture set in. The old-fashioned dressers and cabinets in two divisions were replaced by differently constructed cabinets in ebony or other foreign woods, decorated with precious marbles, or with inlays of bone, ivory and mother-of-pearl. The use of costly materials and varied inlays had its origin in the East. It was introduced into Spain by the Moors, and from Spain spread all over Europe. Spain was well supplied with mahogany and other foreign woods from its American colonies, whilst Portugal imported both ebony and ivory from its possessions in Africa and Hindustan.

In the first years of the reign of Louis XIII. the customary present of the town was to be made to Omer Talon, Advocate-General, and as nothing in the city could be found worthy of presentation, a cabinet was ordered from Germany. The fashion for German and Flemish furniture had begun in the previous century, François, Duc d'Alençon, having bought in Flanders, in 1578, a cabinet for which he paid a large price; and in the inventory of the furniture belonging to Catherine de Medicis several German cabinets and tables are enumerated. The decline of cabinet-making in France attracted the attention of Henry IV. He sent French workmen to the Low Countries to study the ebony carvings, and on their return established them in lodgings in the large gallery of the Louvre.

The influence that counteracted the mania for Flemish art was that of Simon Vouet. He studied for fifteen years in Italy, and then returned to Paris and once more turned the tide in favour of Italian art. He worked for Anne of Austria, for Richelieu, and eventually for Mazarin.

Mr. Lewis F. Day, in his 'Lectures on the Masters of Ornament,' says, "Vouet makes, for the first time in French Renaissance, that abundant use of floral detail, in association with more conventional scroll work, which becomes by and bye a characteristic of the period of the '*grand monarque*.' One sees in him, too, the forerunner of Le Pautre and Berain, both of whom he seems to have influenced. He was, in fact, the precursor of the style Louis XIV."

Louis XIV. came to the throne in 1643, when he was only five years old, and the queen-mother, Anne of Austria, was made Regent. His reign may be conveniently divided into three periods.

*First period.* The king's minority, from 1643 to 1661, when Cardinal Mazarin virtually ruled.

*Second period.* From the death of Mazarin to the death of Colbert, 1661 to 1683, the most brilliant epoch of the king's reign.

*Third period.* From the death of Colbert to the death of Louis XIV., 1683 to 1715, during which time the power and the glory of the king gradually declined.

Two years after the death of Colbert, Louis, under the influence of Madame de Maintenon, revoked the Edict of Nantes, the most unpopular and fatal act of his long reign. It is said that nearly 300,000 Huguenots crossed the frontier towards the end of the seventeenth century, preferring to quit their country rather than change their religion. Large numbers emigrated to England, Holland and Germany, amongst them being the heads of many important industries, skilled workmen, &c. This was very advantageous to the countries in which these emigrants took refuge, but nothing could have been more fatal to the welfare and prosperity of France.

Mazarin, having naturally a leaning to the art of his own country, invited over to France numbers of Italian artists, who after his death, in 1661, were largely employed by the king.

Amongst these were Philippe Caffieri, born in Rome in 1633, who became a naturalised Frenchman in 1665, and died in 1716. He worked a great deal at Versailles, but unfortunately not many of his numerous works have come down to us, except a few panels and the oak doors executed about the year 1672. These doors formerly opened on to the staircase of the ambassadors, and are about the purest specimens of the carvings of the middle period of Louis XIV. that exist. The centre panels are carved with the head of Apollo surrounded by the sun's rays, symbolical of the king, and frequently introduced during this period. In the lower panels are laurel branches. Some of the carved panels in the Trianon may be attributed to Caffieri, also some beautiful carved and gilded frames in the collection of paintings belonging to Louis XIV., now in the galleries of the Louvre. The foreign artists invited to France by Mazarin formed the nucleus of a large artistic establishment founded at the Hotel des frères Gobelins by Colbert, and to which the workshops from Maincy and the Louvre were removed, Charles le Brun the painter being made Director. This establishment, for which he at first supplied the designs, was not only for the fabrication of tapestry but for all that related to the furnishing of the royal apartments, including furniture. Caffieri and Ducci were both located there, as were also Jean Tuby and Matthieu Lespagnandelle, who were associated with Caffieri in the decorations at the Tuilleries. Of Le Brun Mr. Lewis F. Day says, "although he was the master-spirit of the period, the dictator of the arts, he represents rather the king than the artists of the day. To him we owe Versailles, a typical expression of over-bearing monarchy, and one has to get over the oppressive showiness of it before one begins to recognise the art which went to create all this bombast. That the man was a master of administration there is no doubt, and he was fortunate in his helpers. There was Le Pautre on whom he could rely for modelling, Bérain for ornament, Le Nôtre for gardening, Boulle for furniture, Claude Ballin for goldsmith's work; yet all these and more he was able to hold in hand. This servant of the sun was able to pose as himself a sun, round which these brilliant luminaries moved as though they had been lesser lights." Antoine le Pautre was born in 1621 and died in 1691. He was the son of a distinguished cabinet-maker, and first followed his father's trade, but being a skilful draughtsman and engraver he soon rose to distinction, and was made architect to the king. He published numerous designs for interior decorations, furniture, chimney-pieces, &c. His

style is often ponderous, and it is evident in his works that he was much influenced by the studies of ancient Rome which he had engraved for his master, Adam Philippon.

The designs for friezes left us by Le Pautre are bold and vigorous, and his mouldings of doors and panelling are always well grouped and often carved with laurel and oak leaves. He is said to have introduced the little pendant buds in the flutes of the pilasters, examples of which may be seen at Versailles. The ornamentation of the centre rib of the acanthus is probably also due to him.

His chimney-pieces are heavy and wanting in grace, so are his sepulchral monuments, for which he seems to have made numerous sketches. He designed mainly for relief, for plaster, woodwork and furniture, combining together stiff wreaths of laurel leaves, swags of fruit, masks and shells. He was a clever draughtsman, and largely made use of the human figure, especially the figures of children, to the great delight of the king. Jean Bérain's influence was felt rather later, when something lighter was required to give variety to the pompous decoration of the period. He was born in 1637, and died the same year as André Charles Boulle, in 1711. Bérain worked chiefly on the flat, although he published designs for furniture, faience, ironwork, tapestry, &c. His designs are just the opposite of those of Le Pautre; never heavy, always graceful, though he is often a little too prolific in the variety of his ornament. Natural flowers were used by him with conventional ornament, which, whilst having the appearance of being thrown about at random, were, on the contrary, very carefully considered with regard to the masses required and of the spaces to be filled. The palace at Versailles still possesses some of his carved and gilded tables. David Marot, another very clever artist, was born in 1661 and died in 1718. He was a pupil of Le Pautre, and in some respects superior to him. "His design is less confused and more cleverly distributed, as rich without being so pretentious, more restrained, more firmly drawn." (L. F. D.) He designed largely for furniture, his sketches being engraved by his brother Jean. The architects under whose directions these artists worked, were Jean Hardouin Mansart (born 1646, died 1708) and Robert de Cotte (born 1656, died 1735); with the former is more directly associated the work of Le Pautre, whilst the latter developed the freer and lighter style of decoration commenced by Bérain, who was in his turn influenced by the work of Simon Vouet, and by the designs of flowers and vases published by Jean Vauquer. The sumptuous and too often heavy style of Louis XIV. began to die out at the end of the seventeenth century, and gave place to something lighter and less pompous, to suit the taste of Madame de Maintenon. The carvings of the reign of Louis XIV. may be divided into three groups, which coincide very nearly with the three historical periods already given.

First period, when the Renaissance style practised during the reign of Louis XIII. prevailed.

Second period, from the death of Mazarin, 1661, when the king exclaimed "*l'État c'est moi*," to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, during which time J. H. Mansart, Le Brun, Le Pautre and Bérain all vied with each other to glorify the king; this being the period when the typical style of Louis XIV. prevailed.

Third period, when a simpler style, under Robert de Cotte, became the fashion, and which developed into the Regency style and was continued during the first ten years of the next reign.

Louis XIV. died in 1715. His luxurious living and perpetual wars had brought the country to the verge of ruin, and the people cursed the king who was the cause of all this



misfortune. He was succeeded by his grandson Louis XV., a child five years old, and Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, cousin to the young king, was appointed Regent. His principal councillor was Dubois, a man of the most reckless character. The Duke of Orleans died in 1723, and was succeeded by the Duke of Bourbon, who died in 1726.

Nothing could have been more disastrous for France than to be governed by these three men, whose vicious example was followed by the young king. The costly entertainments at Versailles were superseded by supper parties and evening fêtes, presided over first by Madame de Pompadour and afterwards by Madame du Barry. These two favourites took a very active part in state affairs, and their conduct and extravagance contributed not a little to prepare the storm which burst upon the unfortunate Louis XVI.

The new style begun by Robert de Cotte towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. was continued during the early part of his successor's, and in order to distinguish it from the heavier and more pompous style usually known as Louis XIV. it is called the "Regency," and occasionally, by some authors, the style of Madame de Maintenon. Mons. de Champeaux says Robert de Cotte's influence was especially felt in the carved panelling for rooms, now no longer confined to royal apartments. The most important interior of which he was the architect was the choir of Notre Dame, Paris, begun 1699 and finished 1714, illustrations of which may be seen in '*L'Architecture-françoise*,' published in 1752 by J. F. Blondel, who admirably criticises the work. Speaking of the enthusiastic approval accorded to it by the citizens of Paris, he says, "To speak openly, the general view of the work offers nothing grand, majestic or noble in its composition; there is no architecture, and the principal features, such as mass and repose, that are necessary for the decoration of a temple, are here wanting. It is true that the painting, the gilding, the marble, the bronze, the wood, are worked with great artistic skill, and that it is probable there is no edifice of this kind in France which presents so many different objects which would be more useful to copy in detail. . . . One cannot too much advise our young artists to examine these details, so as to counteract the frivolity of the rococo decoration which found favour after the execution of this monument." This is interesting as being the criticism of a contemporary architect, and seems to point to the fact that the merit of the work was rather due to the artists associated with De Cotte than to the architect himself. The wood carvings were executed by Du Goulon, assisted by Louis Marteau and Jean Nel. Du Goulon's work may also be seen at Versailles in the salon "de l'œil de bœuf" (1701), in the bedroom of Louis XIV., and in the small apartments of the king; and for this style of decoration these rooms are unsurpassed. The carving of the rooms in the Hotel Soubise, now the National Archives, is also in part deservedly praised, although there is a tendency to too minute and frittered detail; and in the room decorated with the series of panels from *Æsop's Fables*, and now removed to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, the rococo may be said to have well set in. A photograph of some of the carvings in the Hotel Soubise may be seen in the Art Library at the South Kensington Museum, portfolio 206, 1 and 2. Boffrand was the architect of this hotel. The rococo style is said to have been introduced by Gilles Marie Oppenord, who was born in 1672, and was first architect to the Regent about 1714. He has left numerous illustrations of his work. These appear at first to have been in the earlier style of the Regency, which really began under Louis XIV. He then seems suddenly to burst forth into the rococo style about 1725, and is generally considered "le père du genre rocaille." He died in 1742. During the reign of Louis XIV., and during the Regency, ornamental decoration had been based

upon symmetrical lines, and lattice work or diaper work was a very prominent feature. The husks were always regular in form, and the lobes of the acanthus leaves, generally speaking, did not lap over each other, although towards the end of the Regency this is not so observable.

The chief characteristics of the rococo or *rocaille* are the introduction of the frilled and exaggerated shells and rockwork, and the avoidance of straight lines and symmetry. The acanthus leaf may be better described as "curled endive," and it is twisted and twirled at the pleasure of the artist. The man who was responsible for the greatest extravagances of the style was Jules Aurèle Meissonnier (born 1693, died 1750); his work is quite the exemplification of the term *baroque*, which literally means whimsical, and was first applied to a misshapen pearl which it was the fashion to mount in fantastic and extravagant forms for jewellery.

Meissonnier is said to have founded himself on the Italian, Francesco Borromini, who (in his mad jealousy of the more famous Bernini) had resort to every eccentricity to attract attention.

Another representative man was Jean Pillement, who although still pandering to a frivolous taste, does obtain occasionally, with his Chinese adaptations, more elegant effects. Verberckt (born in 1704, died in 1771), is a man who enjoyed a great reputation for his wood carvings. He executed a great deal of the woodwork at Versailles for "les petits appartements du roi Louis XV.," the room of Madame Adelaide being one of the best authenticated. It is not a specimen of carving that would appeal to most of us, yet it has the merit of being free from extravagance, which was rather exceptional at that time. Maurisan assisted him in some of his works.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis XV. a gradual change and a revulsion against the excesses of the middle period made itself felt. How far the discovery of Herculaneum in 1713, and of Pompeii in 1750, affected this change it is difficult to say; but a severer style, inaugurated by Soufflot, bearing some remote relation to the antique, sprung up side by side with the manner especially characteristic of the reign of Louis XV., and eventually superseded it. The "Petit Trianon" combines the pure lines of classic buildings with fantastic decorations which were essentially French.

Briefly, then, the carvings of the period of Louis XV. may be divided into three groups.

First, the Regency, which, as before mentioned, had begun in the previous reign.

Second, the Rococo, the *Rocaille*, or the *Baroque*, three terms meaning much the same thing, only in a positive, comparative and superlative degree.

Third, the revolt against the excesses of the times, and a return to classical sources for inspiration; in fact, a period of transition to the style of Louis XVI. or Marie Antoinette.

Louis XVI. came to the throne in 1774, and succeeded to a heritage of debts and popular discontents. His principal ministers were Turgot, Malesherbes and Necker, who were quite unable to cope with the difficulties that Louis had to encounter. The National Convention was appointed in September 1792, a republic established, and the king condemned to death and guillotined in 1793; and the queen, Marie Antoinette, shared the same fate a few months later. In this period of twenty years the classic style, with strong French characteristics, commenced by Soufflot, still continued. Mons. de Champeaux says, "a happy fusion took place between the works of antiquity and those of our great sculptors, Pigalle, Houdon, Falconet, Pajou, greatly to the improvement of form." The men who most aided this new movement

were Soufflot, Ledoux, Victor Louis, Bellangé, Dugourc, Jean Démosthène, Cauvet and Delalonde.

One of the most celebrated wood carvers of the period was Georges Jacob. He was received as "maitre menuisier ébéniste" in 1765, but after the year 1789 his sons seem to have undertaken the direction of his works. He devoted himself specially to the carvings of seats, beds, candelabra, console tables and fire screens, carved in wood and afterwards gilded. One of his best known works is the console table at Fontainebleau, which has been so often reproduced. Fourreau was another clever carver. He carved the head in lime-wood for the winter bed of Marie Antoinette, whilst the rest of the ornamentation was carried out in metal. Metal decoration was very largely employed on the furniture, and nothing can exceed the delicacy and beauty of the fittings executed by Gouthière and Riesener. The passion for metal work was however carried to excess, and the wood carver went so far as to endeavour to give his gilded work the semblance of metal, whilst the metal worker infringed upon the cabinet-maker by endeavouring to make furniture without wood, constructing console tables with slabs of marble supported by figures or other ornaments in metal.

Some of the most graceful interiors of this period are due to Victor Louis; notably the Hotel de la Préfecture, Bordeaux. There we have the rooms divided up into a series of large panels, with smaller panels or pilaster slips between. The principal panels are interpanelled, and have pateræ in the corners. The overdoors and pilaster slips are gracefully carved with foliage and flowers. This treatment is more satisfactory than many of the panels carved all over, like one sees in the "petits appartements du roi" (Louis XVI.) at Versailles. In many of these the carved ornament is too sparsely distributed over the ground, and the effect is poor and meagre, probably owing to the designer being more accustomed to design for painted decoration than for relief. In neither of the preceding reigns are the details so delicately or so gracefully carved as in the reign of Louis XVI. (*see* Plate LIV.). Flowers are treated much more naturally, and the veining of the petals, which is a very characteristic feature during the reign of Louis XIV., is quite discontinued. The acanthus also is treated very differently: the lobes lap over each other, and their surface is never broken up by veined lines (*see* Plate XLI.). Unsymmetrical husks are interspersed with the foliage, and, under Salembier, the spiral is compressed until it becomes quite elliptical in form. Another noticeable feature is the introduction of a great variety of elliptical and circular pateræ, and the disappearance of all the frills and rockwork of the preceding reign.

We will now consider the Plates of this Series in detail.

Plate XXXVII. is the upper part of a carved walnut-wood coffer, of which Mr. J. H. Pollen, in his Official Catalogue of the Furniture in the South Kensington Museum, says: "The interlaced cypher is composed of the letters D.S.L.E.L. in Italian court writing. . . . The whole, which is a square, stands on a plinth with beaded moulding on the angles. Interlaced cyphers began to be used in the sixteenth century, and were common in the ironwork, firebacks, gates, &c., of the eighteenth century. But the general look of the piece, beaded mouldings, surface of the wood, and character of the heraldic carving, seems to point to a modern origin. It was made for the furniture of the Chateau de Mailli, in Burgundy, and the arms (on the side panels) are the Mallets, 'armes parlantes' of that family. It is figured in the 'Arts somptuaires,' by Louandre, vol. ii. p. 205, as part of the Carpentier Collection: He attributes it to a period as early as the fifteenth century. It may, however, be questioned whether this is not

a modern reproduction." This example has been selected principally on account of the cypher panel, which is an excellent example of how letters may serve a decorative purpose. The little forget-me-not flower becomes a very noticeable feature in the carvings of the latter half of the seventeenth century. The mouldings are well carved, but lose much of their force by the little veined lines worked over the surface of the carving (*see* p. 5, Series II.).

PLATE XXXVIII. gives examples of the ordinary balustrades of the seventeenth century. The carving is crude, and on the lower pilaster it is heavy and lifeless. The capitals are simply and effectively treated, and the general design and distribution of the whole is satisfactory.

PLATE XXXIX. At the top is an oak panel with a medallion. The mouldings and ornamental details are essentially of the later period of Louis XIV., but the medallion is not at all characteristic of the style and might be considerably earlier.

The lower panel is of the same period.

In these examples we see for the first time the system of interpanelling which began at the end of the reign of Louis XIV., and which was carried on so successfully during the Regency (*see* Plates XLVII. and L.). It is about the best legacy left to us by the artists of those days, and it is surprising that modern decorators have not availed themselves more of the suggestion. It might be applied to any style, and is invaluable when it is desired to leave the lower part of the panel plain, or it is necessary to reduce the amount of carving on account of expense.

PLATE XL. Similar examples to the fragment on the left may be found at the "Grand Trianon," but in these the moulding is reeded and not plain. It is quite possible it may have been done in the earlier reign, as there is a suggestion of the influence of Bérain about it, as well as in the panel on the right. Bérain in his designs always avoided rectangular corners.

PLATE XLI. gives the front and side view of a pedestal, or "gueridon," executed towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. They were introduced from Italy during the ministry of Cardinal Mazarin.

PLATES XLII. to XLVII. may all be classed together as examples of the Regency.

PLATE XLVIII. gives three examples of carved mouldings. Numbers 1 and 3 are early Louis XV., and are in much lower relief than the middle one, executed in the preceding reign. Carved picture frames were a very particular feature of these reigns, and amongst the carvers who devoted themselves specially to this branch are found the names of Robinot, de Nicolet, de Liot, de Renaudin and de Tremblin. When the frames were not part of the panelling of the room, they usually had an elaborate ornament in the centre of each side, similar to No. I., and the mitres were carved in much the same way.

PLATE XLIX. The first panel gives the usual treatment of the shell during the early part of the eighteenth century, and may be seen in carvings executed under the reign of Louis XIV. as well as of Louis XV. The twists and turns of the scrolls are more suggestive of the later period. The centre panel is rather more characteristic of the style of Louis XIV. The third one might belong to either, but the carving is much blunted by the pickling the wood has undergone to remove the paint. The second and third panels have both inner panels on which the ornament dies off, but which do not show very clearly in the plate.

The first and third panels are five-sixteenths, and the centre one nine-sixteenths of an inch in relief.



PLATE L. A good deal of interest is attached to this window shutter, and I am indebted to Mons. Émile Peyre for the following information. He says it belonged to the large gallery in the Palais Royal which was decorated by Oppenord, and was destroyed in 1735 to make room for the "salle du théâtre Français" built by Victor Louis. That at the time of the Commune in 1871 the Palais Royal suffered considerably, and what then remained of the internal decorations were ruthlessly torn down and sold in the Place Royale, when this example was bought. Mons. Émile Peyre has no hesitation in attributing it to Oppenord, although he admits he has no documentary evidence to prove it. Monsieur Peyre considers Oppenord the precursor of the style of Louis XVI., but how can we reconcile this with the opinion of those who describe him as "le père du genre rocaille"? It cannot, however, be denied that in this window shutter, the carving of the wreaths of flowers as well as the general delicacy of the treatment do foreshadow the next style.

J. F. Blondel writes of Oppenord as a very clever architect, whose work was full of charming and varied detail.

Comparing this example with such engravings of Oppenord's designs as are available in the Art Library of the South Kensington Museum, one fails to see any resemblance in this charming window shutter except in the palm ornament at the top and bottom, which was, however, a common feature of the time. In the book entitled '*Recueil des Œuvres de Gille Marie d'Oppenord*' is a sketch, "Projets pour les portes de la grande Galerie du Palais Royal"; but this again is very different to our illustration. It is, however, possible that it was executed under the direction of Oppenord, and that the carver's individuality was allowed full play.

PLATE LI. At the top is a small oval frame with a heavy projecting moulding, carved with bunches of flowers and knotted together by a ribbon in the centre. Such frames were very popular during the reign of Louis XIV. for portraits.

The console table below is dated in the Official Catalogue, arranged by Mr. J. H. Pollen, "about 1760." The ornament bears a strong resemblance to the middle period of Louis XIV., that is to say, the branching palms and the beads up the stem of the acanthus. The general form of the table is, however, too light and elegant for that period; in fact this shape was not introduced until the time of Louis XV., and then with very unsymmetrical decorations. The gracefulness of the outline, the delicacy of the details, and the elliptical scrolls, point rather to the fact that it was executed at a time when the frivolity of the rococo was passing away, to give place to something purer and better.

The carved console table was introduced in the reign of Louis XIV.; it stood against the wall, and on it were placed the costly vases and clocks of the period.

PLATE LII. The panel on the right has caused a good deal of controversy, and Mons. Émile Peyre has again kindly given me his opinion. He considers that it may be placed at the end of the reign of Louis XV., in the transitional period between that and the next reign. Some French experts attribute it to the time of Louis XIII., whilst others would place it at the end of the reign of Louis XIV. The majority of opinions are, however, in favour of Louis XVI.

PLATE LIII. The full relief of the lilies is about three-eighths of an inch, whereas the olive sprays at most rise to one-eighth of an inch. Considering the lowness of the relief, the lilies are carved with considerable skill, but it is curious that the carver should have given



only five leaves to his flower when in reality it is composed of six. On the right is a carved post; the ornaments at the top and bottom are very characteristic of the style.

PLATE LIV. gives a carved walnut-wood panel, which for grace and delicacy of carving could not be excelled, nor could a finer example be found of the carving of the period of Louis XVI., as regards design, mouldings and execution. It was probably for the door of a cabinet, which may account for its superiority both in design and treatment to the usual carved panelling for rooms. Students who are fortunate enough to visit Paris may see the original at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, whilst an admirable cast of the same is in the Architectural Court of the South Kensington Museum.

With this Plate the present Series comes to an end. A continuance of the revival of the styles of Louis XIV., Louis XV. or Louis XVI. is *not* to be desired, but they supply to the designer and the wood carver abundant matter to reflect upon, and suggestions which might be most profitably worked out.

The following List of Books for reference may be useful to the Student:—

- 'Le Meuble,' by *A. de Champeaux*, 2 vols., 8vo.
- 'Le Portefeuille des Arts Décoratifs,' edited by *A. de Champeaux*, folio, published annually.
- 'Four Lectures on the Masters of Ornament,' delivered at the Society of Arts, by *Lewis F. Day*.
- 'Dictionnaire de l'Art Ornemental de tous les styles,' by *Méchin*, 5 vols., 4to.
- 'Motifs historiques de l'Architecture, etc., du commencement de la Renaissance à la fin de Louis XVI.,' Deuxième Série ('Décorations Intérieures, etc.,') by *César Daly*, 2 vols., folio.
- 'Architecture et Décoration des époques Louis XIV., XV. et XVI. au Palais de Fontainebleau,' by *R. Pfnor*, folio.
- 'Les Maîtres Ornemanistes,' by *D. Guilmard*.
- 'Connaissance des Styles Louis XIV. et XV., etc.,' by *D. Guilmard*.
- 'Palais de Versailles,' by *E. Baldus*, folio.
- 'Recueil d'Ornements d'après les maîtres les plus célèbres des XV<sup>e</sup>, XVI<sup>e</sup>, XVII<sup>e</sup>. et XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècles,' by *Édouard Baldus*.
- 'The Dictionary of Architecture' issued by the Architectural Publication Society, 5 vols., small folio.
- 'Les Cafféri,' by *Jules Guiffrey*.
- 'Inventaire général du Mobilier de la couronne sous Louis XIV.' by *Jules Guiffrey*.
- 'Nouveau Dictionnaire des Architectes Français,' by *Charles Bauchal*.
- Photographs of French Wood Carvings of the 17th and 18th centuries, S. K. M., Portfolio 806—1 and 2.
- The works of *Le Pautre*, *Borain*, *David Marot* and *Oppenord*.
- The above can all be consulted in the Art Library of the South Kensington Museum.
- 'Architecture-françoise,' Paris, 1752, by *J. F. Blondel*, is in the British Museum. It gives the details of the choir of "Notre Dame," for which *Robert de Cotte* was architect. Vol. II., Pl. 107-9.



Part of a Walnut Wood Coffin with Terminal Figures supporting a cornice carved with Acanthus leaves.

On the panel is an interlaced Monogram. H. (as shown in colotype) 2 ft. 3 7/8 in. W. 3 ft. 1 1/4 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 237-1866.





French. Middle of 17th Century.



Two Balustrades. Oak. (Restored.) The upper one in the Museum of Science and Art, Dublin.  
The lower one. H. 2 ft.  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. W. (as shewn in collotype) 3 ft.  $11\frac{1}{2}$  in. Greatest width of Balusters 3 in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 762 1895.





French. Late 17th Century.



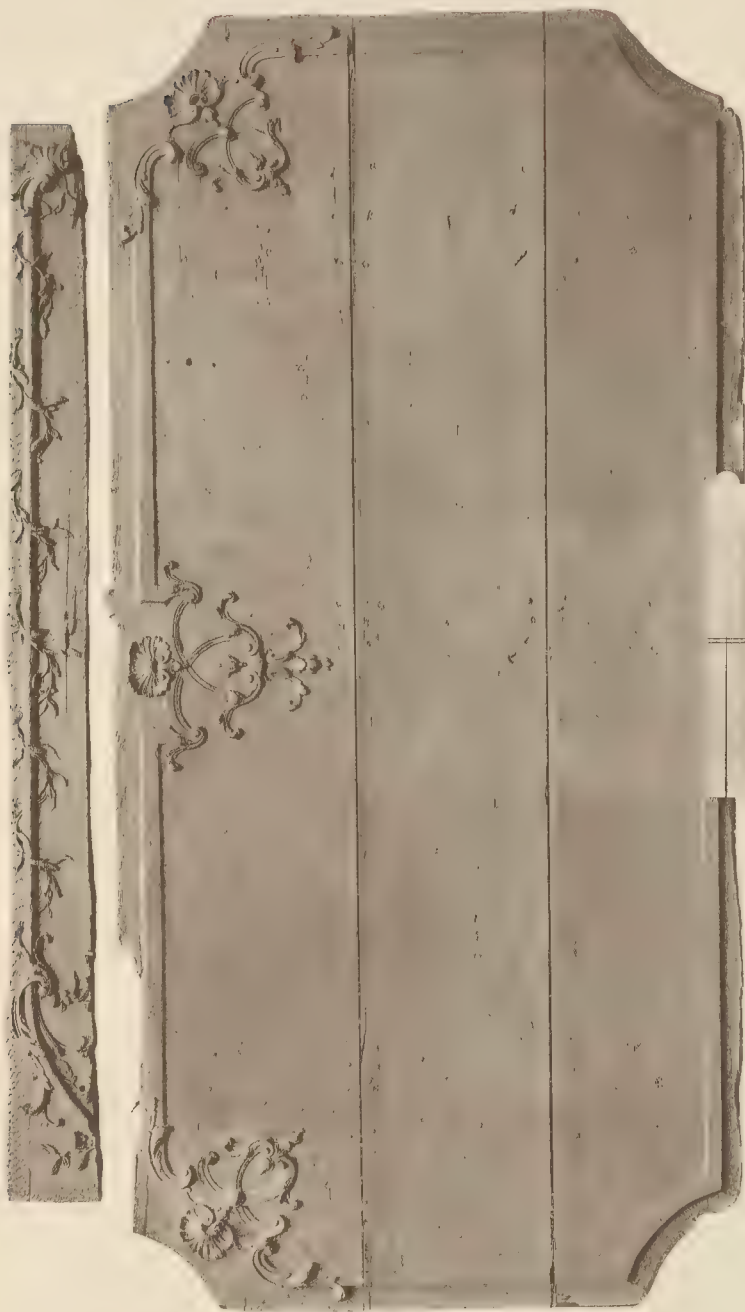
Panel. Oak. A Medallion in the centre, framed in by a moulding and carved corners. Period of Louis XIV.  
H. 1 ft. 1 in. W. 2 ft. 2 in. Reg. No. (Glasgow) 95—136 a. q.

Panel. Oak. With moulded boss in centre carved with delicate scrolls and shells.—Period of Louis XIV.?  
H. 1 ft. 2 in. W. 1 ft. 3½ in.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow. Reg. No. 95—136 b. s.



French. Late 17th Century.



Panel from a Cupboard Door, the corners carved with shells and scrolls. Period of Louis XIV.

Reg. No. (Glasgow) 95—136 b. t.

Fragment of a Panel. Period of Louis XIV. ? H. 3 ft. 5½ in.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow. Reg. No. 95—136 a. m.





French. Early 18th Century.



Pedestal for a Candelabrum or "Gueridon." Carved and gilt wood, formed by a youthful Triton supporting a basket of flowers and resting on a scroll tripod. Period of Louis XIV. H. 3 ft. 2½ in. W. of base 1 ft. 6¼ in.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 97—1866.





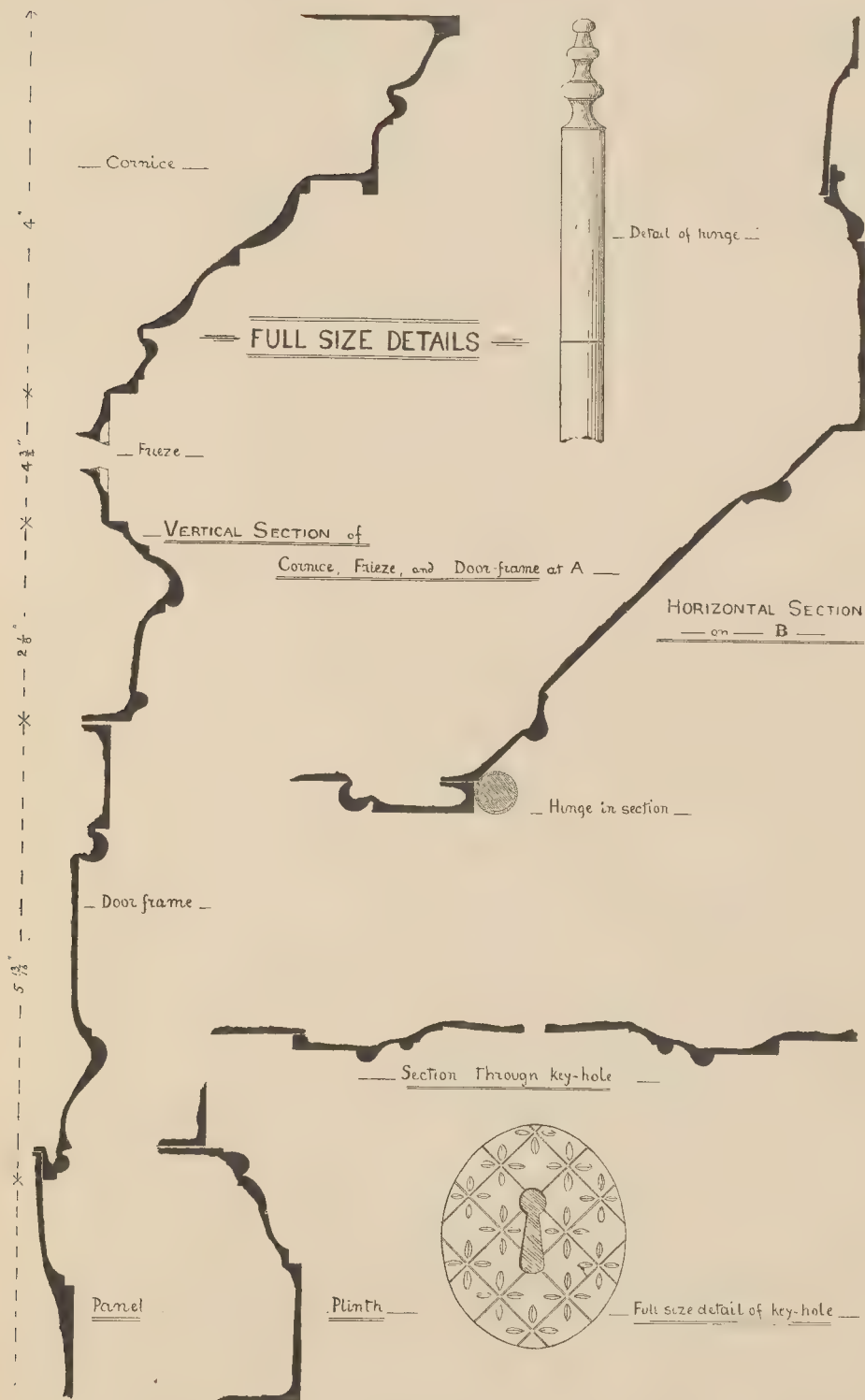
French. Early 18th Century.



Wardrobe. Oak. Period of Louis XV (Regency). H. 7 ft. 3½ in. W. 5 ft. 7½ in.

S. 11. Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 125-1893





Wardrobe. Sectional Details.





French. Early 18th Century.



Two Carved Oak Panels. Period of Louis XV (Regency). Size of the one on the left 13 in square.  
On the right 12  $\frac{1}{4}$  in.  $\times$  12  $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow. Reg. Nos. 95—136 a. h. 95—136 a. i.



French. Early 18th Century.



The top and bottom of a Carved Oak Panel. Period of Louis XV. (Regency). H. 5 ft. 9 in. W. 7  $\frac{1}{16}$  in.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow. Reg. No. 95 136 j.





French. Early 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



Chest of Drawers. Oak. Period of Louis XV. ? (Regency). H. 3 ft. 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. W. 4 ft. 9  $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

South Kensington Museum. Loan.







Carved Oak Panelling. Period of Louis XV. (Regency). H. 11 ft.  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. H. 6 ft.  $\frac{6}{8}$  in.



French. 17th and 18th Century.



Three Pieces of Carved Mouldings with Sections (half size).

No. I. Portion of a Carved Frame with centre ornament. Period of Louis XV.

No. II. A piece of carved Moulding. Period of Louis XIV.

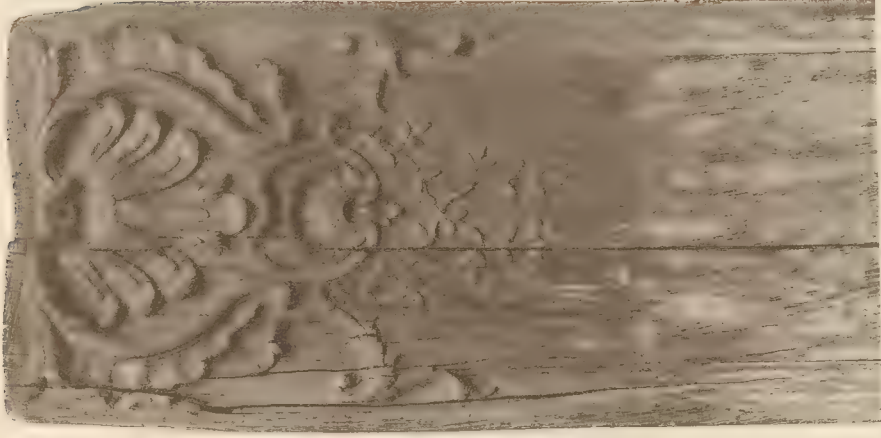
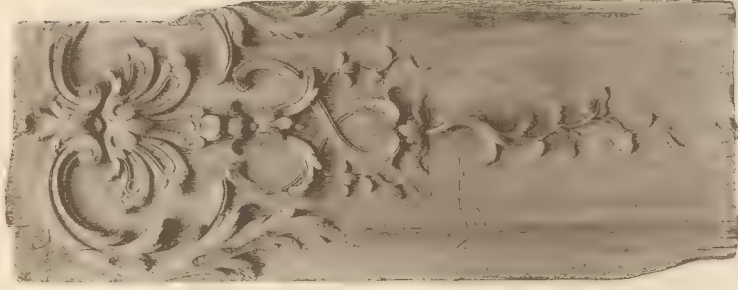
No. III. A piece of carved Moulding. Period of Louis XV.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow.





French. Early 18th Century.



Three Oak Panels, carved with shells and foliage.  
The first and third. Period of Louis XV H. 1 ft. 7½ in. W. 7½ in. H. 1 ft. 2¼ in. W. 5¼ in.  
Centre Panel. Period of Louis XIV H. 3 ft. 9 in. W. 8¾ in.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow. Reg. Nos. 95 136 a. y. 136 a. f.—136 a. 1





Window Shutter. Oak. Carved with a boss and wreath of flowers in the centre and with ribbons, leaves and flowers at either end. From "Le Palais Royal," Paris. Architect, Oppenord. Period of Louis XV.  
H. 9 ft. W. of Carved panel with framing 16¾ in.



French. 17th & 18th Century.



Frame, Gilt Wood. Carved with flowers and fruit. Period of Louis XIV.

Reg. No. 679—1864.

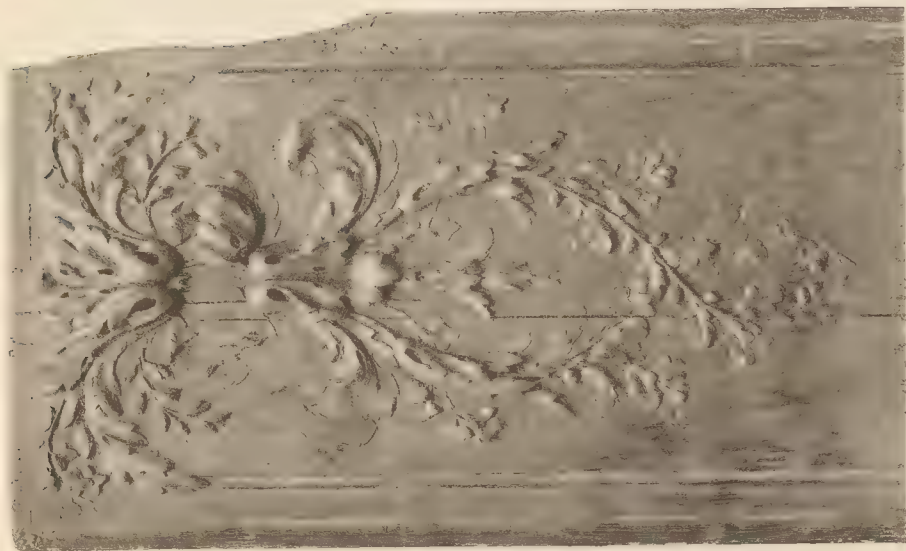
Console Table. Carved and gilt. Period of Louis XV.

South Kensington Museum. Reg. No. 41 1869.





French, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



Two Carved Oak Panels.

No. I. Period of Louis XIV. No. II. Carved with the Acanthus, Ivy and Oak. Period of Louis XVI.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow.



French. Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



Panel. Oak. Carved with Lilies and Olives. Period of Louis XVI? H. (as shewn in collotype) 3 ft. 3 in. W. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

South Kensington Museum Reg. No. 73 1896

Carved Bed Post. Period of Louis XVI. H. 4 ft. 4 in. Dia<sup>r</sup> 4 ins.

The Art Corporation Galleries, Glasgow Reg. No. 95-130<sup>1</sup>





*With the sanction of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education.*

# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS

PRINTED IN COLLOTYPE FROM PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAKEN FROM  
THE CARVINGS DIRECT

EDITED BY

ELEANOR ROWE

AUTHOR OF 'HINTS ON WOOD CARVING'; 'HINTS ON CHIP CARVING'; 'STUDIES FROM THE MUSEUMS'; ETC.

MANAGER OF THE SCHOOL OF ART WOOD CARVING, SOUTH KENSINGTON

---

SECOND SERIES

SIXTEENTH CENTURY



B. T. BATSFORD, 94 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON

1896



## P R E F A C E .

THE First Series of 'French Wood Carvings' deals principally with late fifteenth century Gothic examples, the last four Plates only being in the Renaissance style.

Plate XV. of that Series is the earliest French Renaissance example in the South Kensington Museum, and Plate XVII. one of the finest specimens of French Carving of the Francis I. period.

This, the Second Series, consists entirely of sixteenth century work, from the time of Francis I. to the death of Charles IX. The century, as in the First Series, is divided into early, middle and late, allowing about thirty-three years to each period.

To Mons. Edmond Bonnaffé's work, 'Le Meuble en France au 16<sup>ème</sup> siècle,' as well as to Mons. de Champeaux's 'Le Meuble,' I am much indebted for my general information; to Mons. Ch. Bauchal's 'Nouveau Dictionnaire Biographique et Critique des Architectes Français' for some of the biographies; and to Mons. Victor Duruy's 'Histoire de France' for the history of the times.

ELEANOR ROWE.

46 PEMBROKE ROAD, W.  
*September 1896.*



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		{ COLUMN . . . . .	" "	{ 749-1895 S.K.M. }
XXI	"	FOUR PANELS . . . . .	{ Early " " Middle " "	{ DUBLIN. 818-1895 S.K.M. 856-1895 " } EDINBURGH.
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## CHRONOLOGY.

France.	England.
FRANCIS I. 1515.	HENRY VIII. 1509.
FOREIGN WARS.	THE REFORMATION.
RIVALRY OF CHARLES V.	MARTIN LUTHER.
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" HENRY III.	
HENRY IV. (OF NAVARRE). 1589.	ELIZABETH.
EDICT OF NANTES	
END OF THE CIVIL WAR	
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# FRENCH WOOD CARVINGS

OF

## THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

SELECTED FROM OUR NATIONAL MUSEUMS.

THE Art of a country is so bound up with and influenced by its history, that it will be well to consider what was the condition of France during the sixteenth century before examining these Plates in detail. The spirit of revolt was everywhere; in the arts, in literature, in philosophy and in religion.

Gothic art was being swept away by the Renaissance, which set up as its ideal the classic arts of Greece and Rome. The discovery of America and the West Indies by Columbus in 1492, and the opening out of the route to India by Vasco de Gama in 1498, gave great impetus to commerce. Large fortunes were made and were lavishly spent. The Medicis in Florence were the most important of these merchant princes. They loved pomp and show, and were generous patrons of the arts. Under Francis I. intercourse with Italy developed the luxurious court life in France, which had for so many centuries a powerful influence on manners, art and literature. The power of the king was absolute, but as luxury and self-gratification increased, it gradually passed into the hands of designing women, whose influence was most disastrous to the well-being of France. To keep up the royal state many beautiful castles were built by Francis I. and Henry II., the most celebrated being those of Chambord, Blois, Chenonceaux, Amboise and Anet, whilst the palaces of the Louvre and of Fontainebleau were considerably enlarged and enriched.

During the reign of Francis I. there was continual warfare with Italy about the supposed rights of the Emperor Charles V., surnamed the Great, to the kingdoms of Milan and Naples. Francis I. did not extend his kingdom, but he solidified the empire, and protected it successfully against the encroachments of Charles V., and so did Henry II. It was during the reign of Francis I. that the Reformation, led by Luther in Germany, Calvin in France, and later, by John Knox in Scotland, spread so rapidly, causing the endless religious persecutions that followed.

Francis I. was a very remarkable man, and it is from his reign that modern civilisation may be dated. He was a liberal patron of the arts, and tradition says that Leonardo da Vinci died in his arms; in any case it is believed that Da Vinci died at Clux, near Amboise, in 1519. It is to Francis I. that the Louvre is indebted for nearly all the Da Vinci pictures.

Francis was extravagant to excess (as witness the "Field of the Cloth of Gold"); brave almost to foolhardiness, violent, capricious, unjust and despotic; yet, with all his faults, his

reign was, for art, the golden age of France, and one not likely to be surpassed. Henry II., his son, married Catherine de Medicis, daughter of Lorenzo de Medicis, Duke of Urbino, and niece of Pope Leo X. During their reign the arts still flourished, though France was occupied with perpetual wars abroad and with religious persecutions at home.

At Henry's death in 1559, his three sons being minors, the power fell into the hands of the queen-mother, Catherine de Medicis, a cruel and unscrupulous woman, under whose evil influence France suffered for so many years.

Francis II., who married Mary Queen of Scots, survived his father but one year, and was succeeded by his brother, Charles IX., in whose reign the religious persecutions developed into civil war, François, Duke of Guise, being at the head of the Catholics, and Antoine de Bourbon and his brother, Louis de Condé, at the head of the Huguenots. The terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in 1572. On the death of Charles IX. in 1574, there came to the throne Henry III., a prince whose one absorbing thought was how he could amuse and indulge himself, completely vitiating by his excesses the natural brilliancy of his intellect. The civil war still continued, and Henry, afraid of the power that the Duke of Guise was obtaining over the Catholics, had him basely assassinated in 1588. The following year Henry shared the same fate, and was stabbed by a young monk, Jacques Clement. Catherine de Medicis died six months before her last son, leaving behind her the crown disgraced, the kingdom rent in twain by two strong factions, and the Huguenot party, against which she had so long struggled, about to triumph.

Henry III., leaving no heir, was succeeded by his cousin, Henry of Navarre, under the title of Henry IV. He exterminated all foreign invaders, healed up the breach between the Catholics and Huguenots, and made great financial reforms, which were much needed after the excesses of the former kings. He gave a fresh impetus to commerce, started many home industries, and restored peace to France. This did not free him from his enemies, and he was stabbed in his carriage by François Ravallac in 1589.

Having briefly glanced over the history, we will now consider who were the men whose influence may be traced in the woodwork and carving of the century, and we find that the most celebrated sculptors were Jean Goujon, Germain Pilon, and Nicolas Bachelier de Toulouse.

Jean Goujon was born about 1510. The first recorded notice of his work appears at Rouen in 1540, when he was working at St. Maclou, though probably he was employed a little earlier at the Château de Gaillon by the second Cardinal d'Amboise. From 1548 to 1562 he was working with Pierre Lescot at the Louvre; in 1550 with Philibert de l'Orme at the Château d'Anet, built by Henry II. for Diane de Poitiers; in 1557 with Primaticcio at the Hôtel de Guise, afterwards the Hôtel Soubise, and now the "Archives Nationales." His long association with Paris had a very marked influence on the École de l'Ile-de-France." This School includes a good deal more than is geographically known as "Ile de France." It began at Amboise, spread to Tours, Blois, Orleans, Anjou, Maine, Touraine. It transforms itself at Fontainebleau and finishes in Paris. It was patronised by the sovereign and directed by the leading artists of the day, Michel Colomb, Jean Perreal, Rosso, Primaticcio, Philibert de l'Orme, Pierre Lescot, Jean Goujon, Germain Pilon, Androuet du Cerceau, &c. It was at the head of all the provincial schools, and was always pushing on to something new. Jean Goujon completely overthrew the old traditions by introducing mythological subjects, modelling the figures in

such delicate yet such subtle relief that it is not surprising he found many imitators amongst the furniture makers of his day. The influence of Primaticcio for pronounced relief was quite in another direction, and much to be regretted when adopted by the wood carver. Popular tradition says that Jean Goujon perished in 1572, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, whilst putting some finishing touches to his sculptures in the Louvre, and he is also said to have suffered death as a Huguenot; certain it is that from 1562 no further records of his work are to be found in Paris. Later authorities say he left Paris in 1562, and settled at Bologna, where he probably died a few years after.

Germain Pilon was born about 1528, and died in 1590, just after the accession of Henry IV. to the throne. He worked in wood as well as in stone, and had a great reputation for his figures. Several of his minor works are in the Louvre, and the Church of St. Denis has a rich collection of his figure sculptures.

Like Jean Goujon, he strongly influenced the École de l'Ile-de-France, which towards the middle of the century may sometimes be confused with the "École de Normandie," where Goujon was working in 1540.

Nicolas Bachelier de Toulouse, architect and sculptor, was, according to Mons. Ch. Bauchal, born in 1485, and died in 1572. He worked entirely in the south of France, principally in Languedoc, but no very authentic records are to hand as to his early life. He is said to have studied under Michel Angelo (b. 1475; d. 1564).

Mons. de Champeaux says: "The character of his works is French in their general disposition and the figures which decorate them, but submitted to the Italian influence with regard to the arabesques and the light flowering branches surrounding the busts of children, which one finds in the sculptures in stone executed by the master." He excelled in the figure, but added to it a quaint and grotesque treatment peculiarly his own.

Four examples forming part of the Soulages Collection in the South Kensington Museum are attributed to him by Mons. de Champeaux. A table, No. 7221-60, of which he says: "... "by its simple style and harmonious proportions seems to approach one of the best compositions of Bachelier." Mr. Pollen says of it: "The general design reminds us of the work of Bachelier, Ducerceau and others who made the Italian designs that were so well known and so boldly executed in France." A chair, No. 7211-60, which is well proportioned but without much carving, and two cabinets, Nos. 772-65 and 8453-63; in the latter, although there is a good deal of spirit in the carving, there is too much overloading of the surface, which is detrimental to the harmony of the whole. Mons. de Champeaux says the most authentic piece of Bachelier's wood carving is the door of the sacristy in the Cathedral of Rodez, but Mons. Bion de Marlavargne does not mention Bachelier's name in his work on Rodez Cathedral, although he comments on the beauty of the door, which is dated 1531.

Another artist of the École de l'Ile-de-France was Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, architect and engraver, born in Paris about 1515, and died in 1585. His illustrations are full of quaint humour and originality, but when these came to be adapted to wood carving and furniture the result was most disastrous. He published designs for furniture and chimney-pieces which it is to be hoped were never executed, although their influence unfortunately spread rapidly throughout the country. Under the title of "Meubles" and "Cheminées" they can be seen in the South Kensington Museum Art Library, and if only studied with a view to know what to avoid, may be of some benefit to the student. Androuet du Cerceau left three sons, two of

whom, Jean Baptiste and Jacques II., were architects under Henry II. They had numerous children who kept up the family traditions.

In a brief summary like the present it is impossible to compare the merits or characteristics of the different schools of furniture and carving scattered throughout France during the sixteenth century, but to those of my readers who would pursue the subject further, I would recommend Mons. B. Bonnaffé's and Mons. de Champeaux's excellent works, in which may also be found the names of many of the wood workers of the different schools, and which are far too many to enumerate here. The close proximity of the Low Countries to Picardy, Champagne and Burgundy; of Italy to Lyons, Dauphiny and Provence; of Spain to Languedoc and Gascony, and the perpetual intercourse with Germany, are quite sufficient to account for the variety of characteristics to be found in French carving. A number of Italian artists were also employed at Fontainebleau by Francis I., the most important being François Seibecq, called de Carpy, who executed the wood carvings in "La Grande Galerie de François I.," Rosso, Primaticcio, Benvenuto Cellini, and the architect Vignola, whilst the architect Serlio was associated with Philibert de l'Orme at the Louvre. With the exception of Seibecq, who certainly has not an Italian name, Francis I. employed no foreign furniture makers, which is not surprising, as France at that time was celebrated for its carvers and cabinet makers. The French furniture and wood carving schools maintained their originality until the middle of the sixteenth century, when the colony at Fontainebleau imposed the style of Michel Angelo, a style completely foreign to the French spirit, which up to then had been pre-eminent for grace and simplicity. It is in the woodwork of the early and middle part of the century that we must seek the best French work, for by degrees the workmen travelled from one province to another, sometimes retaining their old traditions, sometimes casting them off to adopt something new; but towards the end of the century they began to repeat themselves, or copy their masters, and a heavy and uniform style was the result. The wood carving of the sixteenth century may be divided into three periods:—

First, the period of Francis I. The characteristics of the style are the introduction of pilasters ornamented with arabesques and carved capitals. A certain square blocking out of the leaves which is a remnant of the Gothic, and a "bossiness" in the carving, accompanied by sharp and decided cuts, whilst the leaves have no veins or other lines than the central stem. The use of cartouches and trophies. Mouldings simple, and usually not carved. [For Examples, see Plates XVI., XVII., XVIII. (First Series); Plates XIX. to XXIV.]

Second, the period of Henry II. The characteristics are, the introduction of Corinthian columns with carved capitals, of strapwork patterns in very low relief, and a method of treating a slightly undulating surface by gouge cuts, which is only suitable to wood. See the pattern above flutes on the column on Plate XX., the bosses in small centre panel of Plate XXI., and the stiles and centre boss on Plate XXX. Mouldings are delicate and beautifully proportioned, and when carved, only with a few gouge cuts or else in very low relief. [For Examples, see Plates XXVI. to XXXVI.]

Third, the period embracing the reigns of Charles IX., Henry III. and Henry IV. Here simplicity and grace give way to excess of ornament, the beginning of which may be seen on the right panel, Plate XXXIV. Pediments are used until the original structural purpose is entirely lost sight of by the pediment being divided and reversed, or placed anywhere to fill a space or break an outline. Terminal figures now become more florid and more



exaggerated, they lose all sense of quaintness, and are used in the place of columns. Mouldings are heavy and too much ornamented, and as the century draws to a close, a gradual decadence may be observed. None of the Plates illustrate this period, which the student should avoid. Examples may be seen in the South Kensington Museum; Cabinets Nos. 2787'-56 and 8453'-63, Table 7215'-60.

It must, however, be borne in mind that although some of the characteristics of the three periods have been enumerated, the Francis I. style ran on through Henry II., as did that of the latter into the succeeding reigns, and so forth. It is only certain innovations, which become noticeable in each period, that enable one to make any distinction. This is only natural when we consider that an artist like Bachelier of Toulouse was born in the reign of Louis XII., and died only two years before the accession of Henry III., his life covering a period of eighty-seven years.

We will now begin to consider the Plates in detail.

PLATE XIX. consists of two fragments carved in walnut-wood. The top panel is the front of a box or drawer. The carving is a quarter of an inch in relief. The modelling is crude, but the simplicity of the treatment is excellent. This style of carving is very noticeable in the early part of the sixteenth century, when the cuts of the tool were simple, and no over-elaboration of the surface either by serrations or ribs was attempted. Compare this and Plates XVII. to XX. with Plate XXXVII. (Third Series). The lower Panel on Plate XIX. is probably the front of a small chest. It is carved all over with very delicate floral scroll-work about one-eighth of an inch in relief. Notice, again, the simplicity of the foliage, which, however, is modelled with more feeling than in the other example. The spiral lines are also admirably treated, the middle of the spiral being flat, with a delicate groove on either side.

The student of wood carving should make a special study of the treatment of spiral lines, which in the hands of the unskilled are apt to look hard and stringy, instead of being graceful lines giving strength and continuity to the design. The most satisfactory treatment is to outline the spiral with a fluter or veiner, using the sides of the tool to cant the edges. The spiral then seems to blend with the background, and has not that detached look which is so often noticeable when the edges are cut down vertically.

PLATE XX. The panel at the top is carved in walnut-wood, and is seven-sixteenths of an inch in relief. It is another good example of the simple sharp cutting of the work of the early part of the sixteenth century. The long iron hinge bands are pierced with Gothic foliage.

The panel at the bottom is from a niche composed of four fluted columns with composite capitals. The carving of the panel is from a quarter to one-sixteenth of an inch in relief.

The little column on the left is very typical of the style of carving introduced during the reign of Henry II. The shell-like ornament above the flutes is produced by gouge cuts, as are the leaves under the volutes.

PLATE XXI. contains four panels. The example at the top is part of a Frieze carved in oak, and is typical of the carving of the time of Francis I. Compare it with Plate XVIII. The relief of the carving is about half an inch. The two lower panels, with shields, are carved in oak, and are good examples of the mouldings and cartouche work of the same period. The relief of the carving is about one inch and one-eighth, and the outer moulding projects about an eighth of an inch beyond this. Traces of colour are to be seen on the shield. The small centre panel is somewhat later, and belongs to the style of work largely associated with

the name of Henry II. and the École de Lyons. The relief is a full sixteenth of an inch; there is no modelling of the surface except in the central bosses, the surface of these being very slightly undulated and the divisions marked with gouge cuts. The way in which the pattern and the margin are united, and the simple and delicate mouldings, should be specially noticed. This example should be grouped with Plates XXV. to XXXI. Very beautiful furniture was produced at Lyons, in which simplicity and grace are admirably combined. The carving is of strapwork, sometimes terminating in foliage (see Plate XXVIII.) in very low relief. The mouldings are beautifully proportioned and very slightly carved. Unfortunately there are no specimens of these cabinets in the South Kensington Museum, the French (Lyons) Cabinet, No. 741, 1895, carved with scroll ornaments, frets and masks, being in quite a different style and rather later in date.

It would be interesting for the student to compare the strapwork of the Henry II. period in France with that known in England as Elizabethan and Jacobean. The comparison is greatly in favour of the French, and where good examples are found in England they are probably due to the influence of foreign workmen. Jacques Lefèvre, a clever cabinet maker and carver, was summoned from Normandy to England by Elizabeth, and numerous Huguenot refugees sought safety here during the persecutions.

At no period in France were the mouldings of the cabinet maker more refined or better suited to their purpose than during the middle of the sixteenth century, and the strapwork patterns are then also at their best. In this simple style of carving the charm of the old over the modern work is, first, that the pattern is in very low relief, generally being under one-eighth of an inch, and from this it may be assumed that the greater the relief the greater the amount of modelling required; second, that where the pattern is not modelled, or only very slightly, the ground spaces are small and the pattern and the margin are generally united. In England these points were not always observed, and consequently the work is often very crude. During the time of Elizabeth the cabinets and chests were sometimes ornamented with a kind of strapwork formed by a sort of reversed 2-shaped pattern, but it was always left flat and not modelled. A spinet, marked "Elizabethan," exhibited in the recent exhibition of English furniture at Bethnal Green, showed a strong French influence.

In the South Kensington Museum the house of Sir Paul Pindar, who was ambassador at Constantinople during the reign of James I., is a very good example of Jacobean strapwork, but if the details are compared with the little panel on this plate, many points of resemblance will be noticed.

PLATES XXV. to XXXI. should be useful to the class-holders of the many amateur and recreative classes throughout the country, where the limited time at the pupil's disposal prevents much knowledge of modelling being acquired or technical skill obtained.

PLATE XXII., a balustrade or door carved in walnut-wood, is a fine example of wood carving towards the end of Francis I.'s reign. It is said to have belonged either to the Château d'Assier, begun in 1534, or the Chapelle d'Assier, begun in 1545, from plans prepared by Bachelier of Toulouse for Galiot de Genouilhac, Governor of Languedoc under Francis I. Whether the design or the carving may be attributed to Bachelier is at present a mere speculation, but the beauty of the work cannot be denied, and is far finer than any of the other specimens attributed to him in the South Kensington Museum. The château is

completely in ruins, only part of the outer walls still standing. The chapel is intact, and therefore it is most probable that the balustrade came from the former. It is said to bear a strong resemblance to the "grille" in the small chapel, in which is placed the tomb of Genouilhac, for which Bachelier received the commission in 1555.

The arches at the top are recessed about an inch and a half; the acanthus leaves on the balusters, the ribbons and small festoons have a relief of a quarter of an inch, rising to three-eighths of an inch on the centre column. (The Plate gives only half of the original.) The base of the small columns is three and three-quarters of an inch square; whilst the base of the central column projects three and five-eighths of an inch beyond. The light band in the left-hand corner is a one-foot rule, the inches of which may be distinguished with a magnifying glass, and it would be advisable for the student to mark them in.

PLATES XXIII. and XXIV. give the front and end of a carved oak chest of the period of Francis I. Compare the details of the carving with Plates XVII. to XXI. The execution is by no means equal to that in Plate XVII., but the style of carving is the same. The lion's head is ugly, and it would appear as if some animals' heads had terminated the upper scrolls, but are now broken off. The system of planting on extra wood in such places where fuller relief is required is said to have been introduced into France by Du Hanon, who executed for Louis XII. the celebrated wooden ceiling for the "Grande Chambre du Parlement." Du Hanon, an excellent cabinet maker, is said to have studied in Italy, and to have there learned the system of building up his material. For a roof, where the carving is not subjected to friction, this is a perfectly legitimate thing to do, but for furniture, or anything else that has to stand the wear and tear of daily use, it is a very great mistake. The carving is about half an inch in relief, and the lion's head, which is stuck on, about two inches in relief. Note that the background is sloped from the margin. The carving on the stiles is about a quarter of an inch in relief, and is quite out of scale with the rest of the work. In Plate XXIV. the section gives the mouldings that lead up to the panel, the inner moulding at the top being worked out of the panel.

PLATE XXV. Two strapwork panels somewhat bolder in treatment than the other examples, and not set off with any mouldings. Admirably suited to the panels of a chest.

PLATES XXVI. to XXXI. are all strapwork patterns. It should be noted how rich and effective is the carved treatment of the stiles in the door, Plate XXVI., the guilloche being carved closely together without ground spaces, and the semicircular ending of the guilloche at one end being very pleasing. It seems as if the door had been photographed upside-down, as, if reversed the semicircular ending to the guilloche would look better, and it is also more likely that the plainer of the square bosses in the rail would be at the bottom.

The frieze of the door given on Plate XXVII. is modern, and quite out of harmony with the rest of the design.

The border on the chair, Plate XXIX., is a simple and effective pattern, and the back of the chair given on Plate XXX. lends itself to reproduction as the front of a corner cupboard, for the construction of which the section of the mouldings would be useful.

PLATE XXXI., with the mouldings greatly modified, would make a good blotter, but unless the panel is properly framed, which is expensive, a wooden book-cover is liable to twist and is therefore unsatisfactory.

PLATE XXXII. Two oak panels, said to belong to the "École d'Auvergne," which

had a great reputation for its heads on medallions, shields, &c. The fanciful costumes of the figures in the medallions, and the little nude figures filling the spandrels, are suggestive of the style of Jean Goujon. Jacques d'Amboise, brother of the Cardinal d'Amboise at Gaillon, was a great patron of the arts in Auvergne. The school was very vigorous during the reign of Francis I., but under Henry II. it came under the influence of the school of Lyons, copying its types without adding anything new.

The mouldings of the panels are very irregular, and appear to have been worked by hand. The relief of the carving is seven-eighths of an inch, the same projection as the outer fillet of the ogée moulding. The width of the stiles is two and a quarter inches, and the rails one and three-quarter inches.

PLATE XXXIII. shows a pleasing treatment of a door. It is in oak, and the carving of the panels is a quarter of an inch in relief. The stiles and rails are very effective, though the treatment is not altogether judicious, as the little oblong panels connecting the guilloche are slightly grounded out, and where these cross the joints the construction suffers.

PLATE XXXIV. consists of two panels, one on the left carved with strapwork, which is possibly earlier than any of the examples that have gone before; yet charming as it is, it is not so refined nor are the mouldings so dainty as in some of the other examples. The panel on the right is considerably later, probably the end of the reign of Henry II. Although remarkably well cut, the design of the panel is uninteresting and the mouldings are overdone with carving. The fret, which becomes a very common feature about 1560, is a bare eighth of an inch in relief. The ground of the panel is rough and uneven, and the carving is from five-eighths to one-eighth of an inch in relief.

PLATE XXXV. Two oak corbels, supposed to have supported the beams of a ceiling. The carving was painted and gilded, and the paint and preparations for the gilding may still be seen on the wood. Though rough the execution is very spirited and vigorous. The ground of the carving, which is about half an inch in relief, gradually slopes from the margin.

PLATE XXXVI. gives two carved panels and a strapwork cartouche. The top panel on the left is composed of strapwork very gracefully intertwined, which is about three-eighths of an inch in relief. The lower panel is also an excellent specimen of this kind of strapwork, and has admirable carving of a mask, scales and floral decoration. The cartouche above it is also ornamented with strapwork, and the mask is well carved. The strapwork bands of these cartouches were often picked out with gilding.

In conclusion, I would recommend to the student frequent visits to our own National Museums. In the Architectural Court of the South Kensington Museum are casts of some of the works of Jean Goujon and Germain Pilon; also casts from the stalls of St. Denis, and the carved wood doors of St. Evreux Cathedral and of St. Sauveur, at Aix in Provence, in which Gothic construction is blended with Renaissance details. These latter mark the transition from Gothic to Renaissance, a link not to be found in the carved woodwork of the Museum.



French. Late 18th Century.



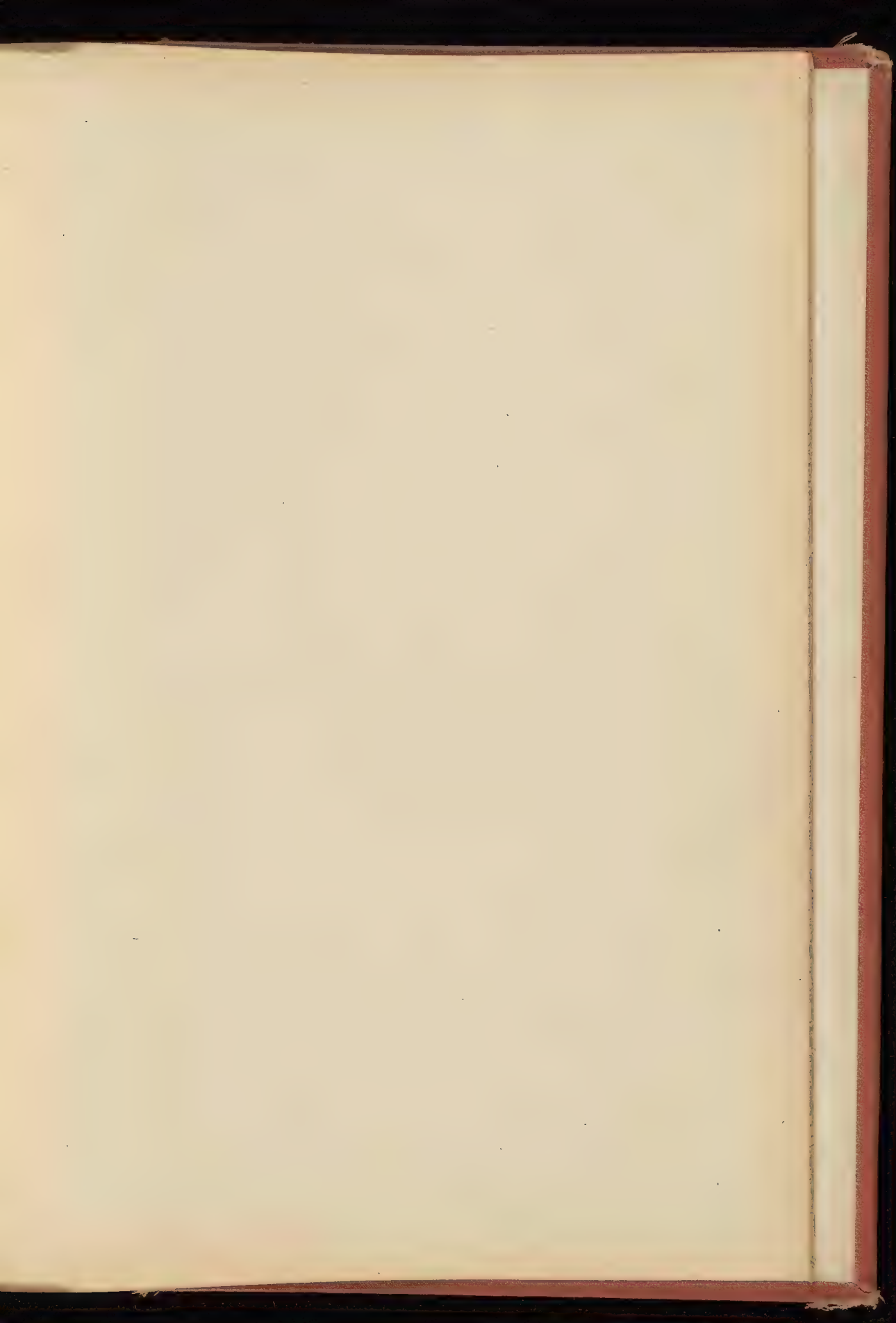
A Cast from a Carved Panel in the "Musée des Arts Décoratifs," Paris. A dancing figure on a pedestal supported by two female figures terminating in foliage.

Sight measure of carved panel. H. 2 ft. 10 in. W. 19 1/4 in.

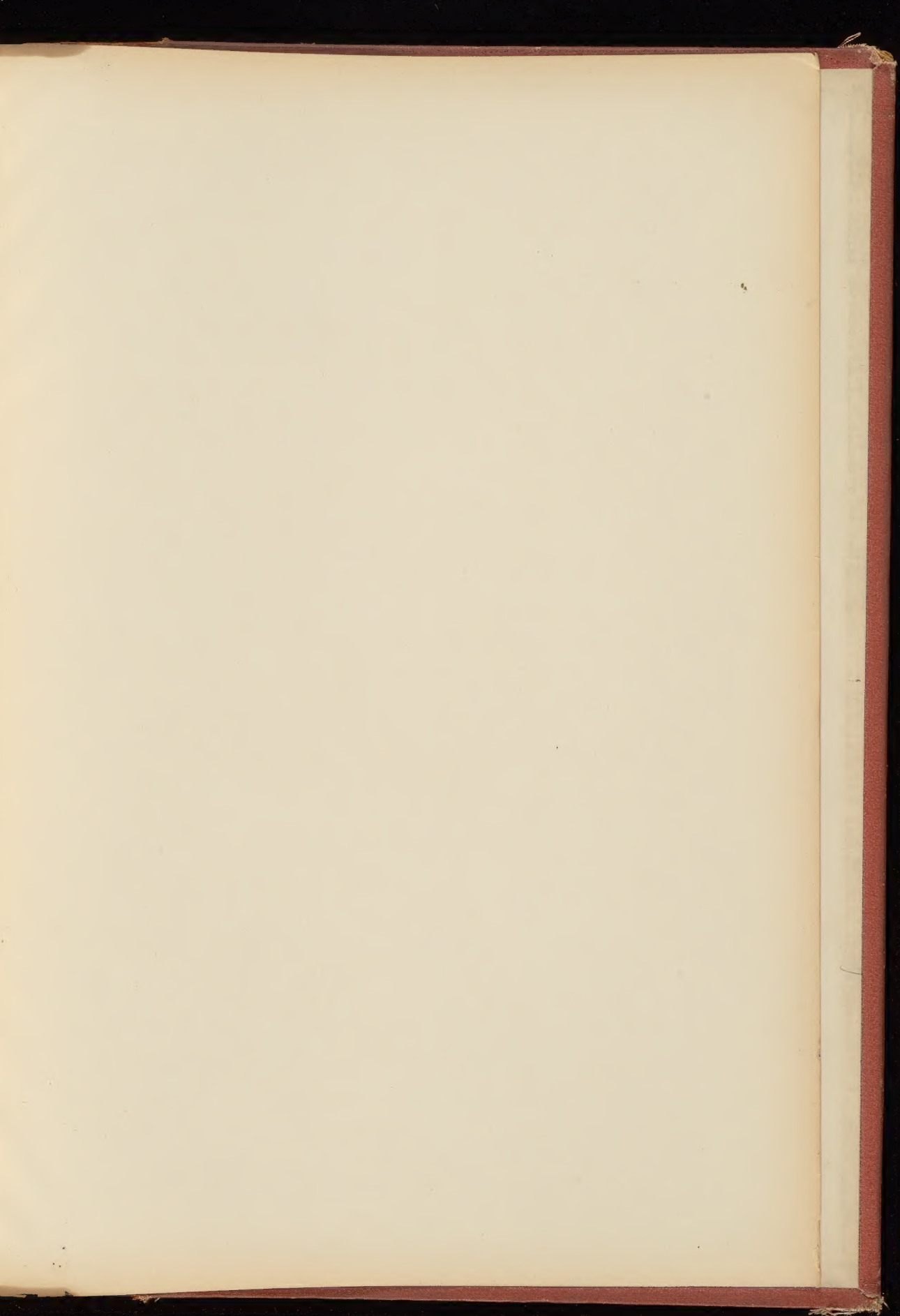
South Kensington Museum. Reg No. 209—1890.











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